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To Mrs H. A. Morse
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NOTICE.

THE project of publishing a 'MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SOUVENIR' was put in execution so late in the season as to render it impossible to procure *designs* and engravings suitable for the work. A similar work is contemplated for the next season, and no expense will be spared to render the designs and engravings both elegant and appropriate.

THE PUBLISHERS





Milton dictating Paradise Lost to his daughters.

Page 248.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS
= SOUVENIR.

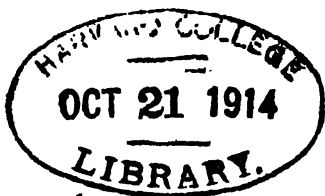


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THE

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS

SOUVENIR.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, to wit :

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BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twentieth day of December, A. D. 1827, in the fiftysecond year of the Independence of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *N. S. Simpkins & Co.* of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit :* 'THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SOUVENIR.'

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ;' and also to an act entitled 'An act supplementary to an act, entitled an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned ; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints.'

JNO. W. DAVIS, { *Clerk of the District of
Massachusetts.*

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THE following compilation was undertaken at the suggestion of a much esteemed friend. Every thing of a controversial nature has been carefully excluded; and no pains spared to render it acceptable to the friends of morality and religion.

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SOUVENIR.

WINTER, A SEASON OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

ALISON.

THERE are emotions which every where characterize the different seasons of the year. In its progress, the savage is led, as well as the sage, to see the varying attributes of the Divine Mind; and, in its magnificent circle, it is fitted to awaken in succession, the loftiest sentiments of piety which the heart can feel. When spring appears, when the earth is covered with its tender green, and the song of happiness is heard in every shade, it is a call to us to religious hope and joy. Over the infant year, the breath of heaven seems to blow with paternal softness, and the heart of man willingly partakes in the joyfulness of awakened nature. When summer reigns, and every

element is filled with life, and the sun like a giant pursues his course through the firmament above, it is the season of solemn adoration. We see then, as it were, the majesty of the present God; and wherever we direct our eye, the glory of the Lord seems to cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. When autumn comes, and the annual miracle of nature is completed; when all things that exist have waited upon the God which made them, and he hath given them food in due season, it is the appropriate season of thankfulness and praise. The heart bends with instinctive gratitude before Him whose beneficence neither slumbers nor sleeps, and who, from the throne of glory, yet remembereth the things that are in heaven and earth.

The season of winter has also similar instructions; to the thoughtful and feeling mind it comes not without a blessing upon its wings; and perhaps the noblest lessons of religion are to be learnt amid its clouds and storms.

It is a season of solemnity, and the aspect of every thing around us is fitted to call the mind to deep and serious thought. The gay variety of nature is no more; the sounds of joy have ceased, and the flowers, which opened to the ray of summer, are all now returned to dust. The sun himself seems to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power; and while night usurps

her dark and silent reign, the hosts of heaven burst with new radiance upon our view, and pursue through unfathomable space their bright career. It is the season when we best learn the greatness of Him that made us. The appearances of other seasons confine our regards chiefly to the world we inhabit. It is in the darkness of winter that we raise our eyes to those heavens which declare his power, and to that firmament which showeth his handy work. The mind expands while it loses itself amid the infinity of being; and from the gloom of this lower world, imagination anticipates the splendors of those new heavens and that new earth, which are to be the final seats of the children of God.

But there is still a greater reflection which the season is destined to inspire. While we contemplate the decaying sun, while we weep over the bier of nature, and hear the winds of winter desolating the earth, what is it that this annual revolution teaches even to the infant mind? Is it, that the powers of nature have failed, that the world waxeth old, and that the night of existence is approaching? No! It is, that this reign of gloom and desolation will pass; it is, that spring will again return, and that nature will again resume its robe of beauty. In the multitude of years that have gone before us, this mighty resurrection has annually been accomplished. To our fathers, and

the old time before them, the yearly beneficence of Heaven has been renewed; and, while the night of winter has sunk in heaviness, joy hath as uniformly attended the morning of the spring.

There is no language which can speak more intelligibly to the thoughtful mind than the language of nature; and it is repeated to us, as it were, every year, to teach us trust and confidence in God. It tells us that the power, which first created existence, is weakened by no time, and subject to no decay; it tells us, that, in the majesty of his reign, a thousand years are but as one day, while, in the beneficence of it, one day is as a thousand years; it tells us, still farther, that, in the magnificent system of his government, there exists no evil; that the appearances, which, to our limited and temporary view, seem pregnant with destruction, are, in the mighty extent of his providence, the sources of returning good; and that, in the very hours when we might conceive nature to be deserted and forlorn, the spirit of the Almighty is operating with unceasing force, and preparing in silence the renovation of the world.

Such are the first instructions which this season is fitted to bring. Amid the solemn thoughts which it awakens, it leads us to the contemplation of that boundless wisdom which governs the revolutions of nature; amid the apparent decay of being, it reminds us of that almighty power by

which all is renewed; and, by the very contrasts which it presents, it tells us of the unceasing goodness of Him whom both summer and winter obey.

WINTER NIGHT.

**HAIL, Winter! sullen monarch! dark with clouds;
Throned on bleak wastes, and fierce, and cold with
storms;**

**Welcome thy blasting cold and treasured snow!
Thy raving, rending winds, do but compose
My soul, and 'midst thy gloom, my heart
Smiles like the opening spring. Thy long, drear nights,
Winter, I hail! The cold, receding sun
I love to follow to the cloudy west,
And see thy twilight deepen into gloom
Of thickest darkness. Round my cheering fire,
How I enjoy the glistening eye, and smile,
And burning cheek, and prattle innocent,
Of my dear little ones! And when they sink,
With heavy eyes, into the arms of sleep,
Peaceful, and smiling still, and breathing soft,
How pleasant glide the hours in converse pure
With her whom first I loved; who long has crowned
My joys, and soothed me, with her gentle voice,
Under a load of sorrows; who has felt
The power of truth divine, and from whose lips
I catch the peace and love of saints in heaven!
Vain World! we envy not your joys. We hear
Your rattling chariot wheels, and weep for you;
We weep that souls immortal can find joy
In forcing laughter, dissipating thought;
In the loose stage, the frisking dance, the pomp,
And forms, and ornaments of polished life;**

In heartless, hypocritic show of love,
In giddy nonsense, in contempt of truth,
Which elevates the soul, and swells the heart
With hope of holy bliss. We mourn your waste
Of mind, of strength, of wealth. Think, thoughtless
World,

How many fatherless and widows pine
In want! how many shiver in the storm!
Over a dying flame, how many cower
In some poor hovel, pressing to their breasts
Their little ones, to save them from the cold!
Oh! think what aching hearts ye might relieve!
What brooding sorrows ye might cheer! what tears
Of friendless, naked, moaning poverty,
Ye might wipe off with lenient sympathy!

THE SPIRIT OF POLITE LITERATURE COMPARED WITH THAT OF CHRISTIANITY.

JOHN FOSTER.

It is a prominent characteristic of the christian revelation, that, having declared this life to be but the introduction to another, it systematically preserves the recollection of this great truth through every representation of every subject, so that the reader is not allowed to contemplate any of the interests of life in a view which detaches them from the grand objects and conditions of life itself. An apostle could not address his friends on the most common concerns, for the length of a page, without these final references. He is like a person whose eye, while he is conversing with you about an object, or a succession of objects immediately near, should glance every moment towards some great spectacle appearing on the distant horizon. He seems to talk to his friends in somewhat of that manner of expression with which you can imagine that Elijah spoke, if he remarked to his companion any circumstance in the journey from Bethel to Jericho, and from Jericho to the Jordan; a manner betraying the sublime anticipation which was pressing upon his thoughts. The correct consequence of conversing with our Lord and his apostles would be, that

the thought of immortality should become almost as habitually present and familiarized to the mind as the countenance of a domestic friend; that it should be the grand test of the value of all pursuits, friendships, and speculations; and that it should mingle a certain nobleness with every thing which is permitted to occupy our time. Now how far will the discipline of modern polite literature coincide?

I should be pleased to hear a student of that literature seriously profess that he is often and impressively reminded of futurity, and to have it shown that ideas relating to this great subject are presented in a sufficient number, and in a proper manner, to produce an effect which should form a respectable portion of the whole effect produced by these authors on susceptible minds. But there is no ground for expecting this satisfaction. It is true that the idea of immortality is so exceedingly grand, that many writers of genius, who have felt but little genuine interest in religion, have been led, by their perception of what is sublime, to introduce an allusion which is one of the most powerful means of elevating the imagination. And the energy of their language has been worthy of the subject. In these instances, however, it is not always found that the idea is presented exactly in that light, which both shows its individual grandeur, and indicates the extent of its necessary

connexion with other ideas. It appears somewhat like a majestic tower, which a traveller in some countries may find standing in a solitary scene, no longer surrounded by that great assemblage of buildings, that ample city, of which it was raised to be the centre, the strength, and the ornament. Immortality has been had recourse to in one page of an ingenious work as a single topic of sublimity, in the same manner as a stupendous natural phenomenon, or a brilliant achievement, has been described by another. The author's object might rather seem to have been to supply an occasional gratification of taste, than to reduce the mind and all its feelings under the perpetual dominion of a grand practical principle.

Taking this defective kind of acknowledgment of a future state, together with that entire oblivion of the subject which prevails through an ample portion of elegant literature, I think there is no hazard in saying, that a reader who is satisfied without any other instructions, will learn almost every other lesson sooner than the necessity of habitually living for eternity. Many of these writers seem to take as much care to guard against the inroad of ideas from this quarter, as the inhabitants of Holland do against the irruption of the sea; and their writings do really form a kind of moral dyke, against an invasion from the other world. They do not instruct a man to act,

to enjoy, and to suffer, as a being that may by to-morrow have finally abandoned this orb; every thing is done to beguile the feelings of his being 'a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth.' The relation which our nature bears to the circumstances of the present state, and which individuals bear to one another, is mainly the ground on which these considerations of duty proceed and conclude. And their schemes of happiness, though formed for beings at once immortal and departing, include little which avowedly reaches to that world to which they are removing, nor reach beyond the period at which they will properly but begin to live. They endeavour to raise groves of an earthly paradise, to shade from sight that vista which opens to the distance of eternity.

THE INSANITY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

BIGLAND.

THE circumstance of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity is related in language so strongly figurative, that it has perplexed many common readers not conversant with scripture phraseology. There is no ground, however, to call the fact in question. It is perhaps a vain attempt to endeavour to reconcile the contradictory computations of chronologers relative to many occurrences, which hap-

20 THE INSANITY OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

pened in the ages of remote antiquity. Jerusalem was taken in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, and the term of the captivity was seventy years; but it is not possible to ascertain the duration of this reign; and it is equally impossible to discover exactly at what time the books of the scriptures were collected and arranged; but it is well known that it happened soon after the return of the Jews from the captivity. From these circumstances, therefore, it seems probable that this extraordinary history was written within about fifty years after the thing happened. Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest monarch, as well as the most distinguished political and military character of the age in which he lived, and in every respect the most conspicuous personage that had appeared on the theatre of the world. Some of the Jews who returned from the captivity, as well as some of the aged inhabitants of Babylon, could, perhaps, when this account was written, remember his reign and the circumstance of his insanity. At least his reign could not fail, at that time, to be fresh in the memory of the inhabitants of those countries. So remarkable a circumstance, in the history of so conspicuous and celebrated a character, must have been universally known and publicly talked of, both by the Jews and Babylonians. In such cir-

cumstances a fabrication of that nature must have been immediately detected.

The sacred historians relate, that Nebuchadnezzar, walking in the garden of his palace, and having his thoughts absorbed in the contemplation of his own greatness and power, and insensible to whom he was indebted for these, his reason suddenly departed from him. This is no physical improbability. Thousands of similar cases may be found in the annals of medical experience, and produced from the same cause; pride and vain-glory. They then tell us, that from a man he was transformed into a beast; a strong figurative expression, used to signify his deprivation of reason, the distinguishing characteristic of human nature, which discriminates man from the brute creation. By the representation of his hair growing like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws, that deformity of his exterior appearance, which must be the consequence of so dreadful a state of insanity, is hyperbolically expressed. As to his running wild with the beasts of the field, &c., it is probable that the unfortunate maniac spent the greater part of his time in wandering about in the parks and forests belonging to the royal palace, though under the inspection of persons appointed to take care of him.

The monarch, on the recovery of his reason, appears to have made suitable reflections on his

crimes and sufferings, and to have acquired just ideas of the weakness and insufficiency of man, although ever so highly exalted; of the instability of all human power and grandeur, and of the absolute subjection of the greatest monarchs to the will of that supreme and omnipotent Being, who, according to the irresistible decrees of his providence, disposes all things as he pleases. This is the genuine representation of the fact related in this remarkable story.

FILIAL AND FRATERNAL DUTIES.

DR BROWN.

EVERY human being has been the subject of many cares before he could acquire even the thoughtless vigor of boyhood; and how many cares additional were necessary then, to render that thoughtless vigor something more than mere power of doing injury to itself! They whose constant attendance was necessary to preserve our very being,—to whom we owe the instruction we received, and, in a great measure too, our very virtues—may have sometimes, perhaps, exercised a rigor that was unnecessary, or abstained from affording us comforts which we might have enjoyed without any loss of virtue. But still the amount of advantage is not to be forgotten on ac-

count of some slight evil. We owe them much, though we might have owed them more; and, owing them much, we cannot morally abstain from paying them the duties of those who owe much. They should have no wants while we have even the humblest superfluity; or rather, while want is opposed to want, ours is not that of which we should be the first to think. In their bodily infirmities, we are the attendants who should be most assiduous round their couch or their chair; and even those mental infirmities of age which are more disgusting; the occasional peevishness, which reproaches for failures of duty that were not intended; the caprice that exacts one day what it would not permit the day before, and what it is again to refuse on the succeeding day, we are to bear, not as if it were an effort to bear them, and a sacrifice to duty, but with that tenderness of affection which bears much, because it loves much, and does not feel the sacrifices which it occasionally makes, because it feels only the love which delights in making them. How delightful is the spectacle, when, amid all the temptations of youth and beauty, we witness some gentle heart that gives to the couch of the feeble, and, perhaps, of the thankless and repining, those hours which others find too short for the successive gaieties with which an evening can be filled; and that prefers to the smile of universal

admiration, the single smile of enjoyment, which, after many vain efforts, has at last been kindled on one solitary cheek!

If filial love be thus ready to bear with bodily and moral infirmities, it is not less ready to bear with intellectual weakness. There is often, especially in the middle classes of life, as great a difference of mental culture in the parent and child, as if they had lived at the distance of many centuries. The wealth that has been acquired by patient industry, or some fortunate adventure, may be employed in diffusing all the refinements of science and literature to the children of those to whom the very words, science and literature, are words of which they would scarcely be able, even with the help of a dictionary, to tell the meaning. In a rank of life still lower, there are not wanting many meritorious individuals, who, uninstructed themselves, labor indefatigably to obtain the means of liberal education for one, whose wisdom, in after years, when he is to astonish the village, may gratify at once their ambition and love. It would, indeed, be painful to think that any one, whose superiority of knowledge has cost his parents so much fatigue, and so many privations of comfort, which, but for the expense of the means of his acquired superiority, they might have enjoyed, should turn against them, in his own mind, the acquirements which

were to them of so costly a purchase, despising them for the very ignorance which gave greater merit to their sacrifice, and proud of a wisdom far less noble, when it can thus feel contempt, than the humble ignorance which it despises.

Next in order to the relationship of parent and child, may be considered the relation which the child bears to those who are united with him, by the same tie, to the same parental bosoms. If friendship be delightful; if it be above all delightful to enjoy the continued friendship of those who are endeared to us by the intimacy of many years, who can discourse with us of the frolics of the school, of the adventures and studies of the college, of the years when we first ranked ourselves with men in the free society of the world; how delightful must be the friendship of those who, accompanying us through all this long period, with a closer union than any casual friend, can go still farther back, from the school to the very nursery which witnessed our common pastimes; who have had an interest in every event that has related to us, and in every person that has excited our love or our hatred; who have honored with us those to whom we have paid every filial honor in life, and wept with us over those whose death has been to us the most lasting sorrow of our heart! Such, in its wide, unbroken sympathy, is the friendship of brothers, considered even as

friendship only; and how many circumstances of additional interest does this union receive from the common relationship to those who have original claims to our still higher regard, and to whom we owe an acceptable service, in extending our affection to those whom they love. Every dissension of man with man, excites in us a feeling of painful incongruity. But we feel a peculiar incongruity in the discord of those, whom one roof has continued to shelter during life, and whose dust is afterwards to be mingled under a single stone.

CONDUCT OF INFIDEL WRITERS IN REGARD TO CHRISTIANITY.

DR PALEY.

INFIDELITY has been served up in every shape that is likely to allure, surprise, or beguile the imagination; in a fable, a tale, a novel, a poem; in interspersed and broken links; remote and oblique surmises; in books of travels, of philosophy, of natural history; in a word, in any form rather than the right one, that of a professed and regular disquisition. And because the coarse buffoonery and broad laugh of the old and rude adversaries of the christian faith, would offend the

taste, perhaps, rather than the virtue, of this cultivated age, a graver irony, a more skilful and delicate banter, is substituted in their place. An elegant historian,* beside his more direct, and therefore fairer, attacks upon the credibility of evangelic story, has contrived to weave into his narration one continued sneer upon the cause of Christianity, and upon the writings and characters of its patrons. The knowledge which this author possesses of the frame and conduct of the human mind, must have led him to observe, that such attacks do their execution without inquiry. Who can refute a sneer? Who can compute the number, much less, one by one, scrutinize the justice, of those disparaging insinuations, which crowd the pages of this elaborate history? What reader suspends his curiosity, or calls off his attention from the principal narrative, to examine references, to search into the foundation, or to weigh the reason, propriety, and force of every transient sarcasm and sly allusion, by which the christian testimony is depreciated and traduced, and by which, nevertheless, he may find his persuasion afterwards unsettled and perplexed?

But the enemies of Christianity have pursued her with poisoned arrows. Obscenity itself is made the vehicle of infidelity. The awful doc-

* Hume.

trines, if we be not permitted to call them the sacred truths, of our religion, together with all the adjuncts and appendages of its worship and external professions, have been sometimes impudently profaned by an unnatural conjunction with impure and lascivious images. The fondness for ridicule is almost universal, and ridicule to many minds is never so irresistible as when seasoned with obscenity, and employed upon religion. But in proportion as these noxious principles take hold of the imagination, they infatuate the judgment; for trains of ludicrous and unchaste associations adhering to every sentiment and mention of religion, render the mind indisposed to receive either conviction from its evidence, or impressions from its authority. And this effect being exerted upon the sensitive part of our frame, is altogether independent of argument, proof, or reason; is as formidable to a true religion as a false one; to a well grounded faith as to a chimerical mythology, or fabulous tradition. Neither, let it be observed, is the crime or danger less, because impure ideas are exhibited under a veil, in covert and chastised language.

Seriousness is not constraint of thought; nor levity, freedom. Every mind, which wishes the advancement of truth and knowledge in the most important of all human researches, must abhor this licentiousness, as violating no less the laws of

reasoning, than the rights of decency. There is but one description of men to whose principles it ought to be tolerable; I mean that class of reasoners who can see but little in Christianity, even supposing it to be true. To such adversaries we address this reflection: Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following, 'The hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation,' he had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles, with which his mission was introduced and attested; a message, in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries. It is idle to say, that a future state had been discovered already. It had been discovered, as the Copernican system was; it was one guess among many. He alone discovers, who proves; and no man can prove this point, but the teacher who testifies by miracles that his doctrine comes from God.

VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

ADDISON.

A BELIEVER may be excused by the most hardened atheist for endeavouring to make him a convert, because he does it with an eye to both their interests. The atheist is inexcusable who tries to gain over a believer, because he does not propose the doing himself or the believer any good by such a conversion.

The prospect of a future state is the secret comfort and refreshment of my soul; it is that which makes nature look gay about me; it doubles all my pleasures, and supports me under all my afflictions. I can look at disappointments and misfortunes, pain and sickness, and death itself, and, what is worse than death, the loss of those who are dearest to me, with indifference, so long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity, and the state of being in which there will be no fears or apprehensions, pains or sorrows, sickness or separation. Why will any man be so impertinent as to tell me all this is only fancy and delusion? Is there any merit in being the messenger of ill news? If it is a dream, let me enjoy it, since it makes me both the happier and the better man.

I must confess I do not know how to trust a

man who believes neither heaven nor hell, or in other words, a future state of rewards and punishments. Not only natural selflove, but reason, directs us to promote our own interest above all things. It can never be for the interest of a believer to do me mischief, because he is sure, upon the balance of accounts, to find himself a loser by it. On the contrary, if he consider his own welfare in his behaviour towards me, it will lead him to do me all the good he can, and at the same time, restrain him from doing me an injury. An unbeliever does not act like a reasonable creature, if he favors me contrary to his present interest, or does not distress me when it turns to his present advantage. Honor and good nature may indeed tie up his hands; but as these would be very much strengthened by reason and principle, so without them they are only instincts, or wavering, unsettled notions, which rest on no foundations.

As folly and inconsiderateness are the foundations of infidelity, the great pillars and supports of it are either a vanity of appearing wiser than the rest of mankind, or an ostentation of courage in despising the terrors of another world, which have so great an influence on what they call weaker minds, or an aversion to a belief that must cut them off from many of those pleasures they pro-

pose to themselves, and fill them with remorse for many of those they have already tasted.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

EDWARD IRVING.

WE have now before us a subject, which, for the magnificence of the scenery, the magnitude of the transaction, and the effects which it draweth on, stands unrivalled in the annals of human knowledge; a subject, indeed, with which the powers of conception cannot be brought to contend. Imagination cowers her wing, unable to fetch the compass of the ideal scene. The great white throne descending out of heaven, guarded and begirt with the principalities and powers thereof; the awful presence, at whose sight the heavens and the earth flee away, and no place for them is found; the shaking of the mother elements of nature, and the commotion of the hoary deep, to render up their long dissolved dead; the rushing together of quickened men upon all the winds of heaven, down to the centre where the Judge sitteth on his blazing throne; to give form and figure and utterance to the mere circumstantial pomp of such a scene, no imagination availeth. The archangel, with the trump of God,

riding sublime in the midst of heaven, and sending through the widest dominion of death and the grave, that sharp summons that divideth the solid earth, and rings through the caverns of the hollow deep, piercing the dull cold ear of death with the knell of their departed reign; the death of death, the disinheriting of the grave, the reign of life, the second birth of living things, the reunion of body and soul, the one from unconscious sleep, the other from apprehension and unquiet abodes; the congregation of all generations over whom the stream of time hath swept; this outstretches my understanding, no less than the material imagery confuses my imagination. And when I bring the picture to my heart, its feelings are overwhelmed. When I fancy this quick and conscious frame, one instant reawakened and re-invested, the next summoned before the face of the Almighty Judge; now rebegotten, now sifted through every secret corner; my poor soul, possessed with the memory of its misdeeds, submitted to the searching eye of my Maker, my fate depending upon his lips, my everlasting, changeless fate; I shriek and shiver with mortal apprehension. And when I fancy the myriads of men all standing thus explored and known, I seem to hear their shivering, like the aspen leaves in the still evening of autumn. Pale fear possesseth every countenance, and blank conviction every

quaking heart. They stand like men upon the perilous edge of battle, withholden from speech, and pinched for breath, through excess of struggling emotions; shame, remorse, and mortal apprehension, and trembling hope.

Then the recording angel opens the book of God's remembrance, and inquisition proceedeth apace. Anon they move quicker than the movement of thought, to the right and left, two most innumerable companies. From his awful seat, his countenance clothed with the smile which makes all heaven gay, the Judge pronounceth blessings forever and ever upon the heads of his disciples, and dispenseth to them a kingdom prepared by God from the first of time. To their minds, seized with the tidings of unexpected deliverance, it seemeth as a dream, and they wonder with ecstasy at the unbounded love of their Redeemer. They wonder, and they speak their unworthiness; but they are reassured by the voice of Him that changeth not. Then joy seizeth their whole soul, and assurance of immortal bliss. Their trials are ended, their course is finished, the prize is won, and the crown of eternal life is laid up for them in store; fulness of joy and pleasures forever, at the right hand of God.

THE HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN.

EDWARD IRVING.

GLORIOUS bodies are not restored to the righteous, only to strike a harp, nor imperishable bodies to the wicked, only to suffer and not die. To the righteous they are given to renew the connexion between spirit and matter, which is productive, even in this fallen world, of such exquisite delight; and, in order to meet the nicer capacities of these new formed organs, a new world is created, fair as the sun, beautiful as the moon, fresh and fragrant as the garden of Eden. And around this new habitation of the righteous is thrown a wall like the crystal wall of heaven itself, within which nothing shall enter to hurt or to defile. There shall be no sickness nor sorrow of countenance, and there shall be no more death. There shall be no more stormy passion, with its troublous calm of overspent rage, and its long wreck of ruin and havoc, which no time can repair. No wars, nor rumors of wars and bloodshed, shall ever again spot the bosom of the ground; and rivalry shall no longer trouble friendship, nor jealousy love; nor shall ambition divide states, which, be they commonwealths or royal sovereignties, shall dwell in untroubled peace. The cares of life shall no

longer agitate the bosom, and the reverses of life be forever unknown. Hunger and thirst shall no longer be felt, and the heat of the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night.

Of how many cheap, exquisite joys are these five senses the inlets! and who is he that can look upon the beautiful fragrance of the morning, lying in the freshness of the dew, and the joyful light of the risen sun, and not be happy? Cannot God create another world many times more fair, and cast over it a mantle of light many times more lovely, and wash it with purer dew than ever dropped from the eyes of the morning? Can he not shut up winter in his hoary caverns, or send him howling over another domain? Can he not form the crystal eye more full of sweet sensations, and fill the soul with a richer faculty of conversing with nature, than the most gifted poet did ever possess? Think you the creative function of God is exhausted upon this dark and troublous ball of earth; or that this body and soul of human nature are the masterpiece of his architecture? Who knows what new enchantment of melody, what new witchery of speech, what poetry of conception, what variety of design, and what brilliance of execution, he may endow the human faculties withal? in what new graces he may clothe nature, with such various enchantment of hill and dale, woodland, rushing streams, and living foun-

tains ; with bowers of bliss and sabbath scenes of peace, and a thousand forms of disporting creatures, so as to make all the world hath beheld, to seem like the gross picture with which you catch infants, and to make the Eastern tale of romances, and the most rapt imagination of Eastern poets, like the ignorant prattle and rude structures which first delight the nursery, and afterwards ashamed our riper years ?

THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

FOSTER.

It is a moderate computation which supposes a hundred thousand millions to have died since the exit of righteous Abel. Oh ! it is true that man hath entered the creation of God ! that sin has made a breach in that innocence which fenced man round with immortality, and even now the great spoiler is ravaging the world ! As mankind have still sunk into the dark gulf of the past, history has given buoyancy to the most wonderful of their achievements and characters, and caused them to float down the stream of time to our own age. It is well ; but if, sweeping aside the pomp and deception of life, we could draw from the last hours and death beds of our ancestors, all the

illuminations, convictions, and uncontrollable emotions of heart, with which they have quitted it, what a far more affecting history of man should we possess! Behold all the gloomy apartments opening, in which the wicked have died! Contemplate, first, the triumphs of iniquity, and here behold their close; witness the terrific faith, the too late repentance; the prayers suffocated by despair, and the mortal agonies!

These, once, they would not believe; they refused to consider them; they could not allow that the career of time and pleasure was to end. But now, truth, like a blazing star, darts over the mind, and but shows the way to that 'darkness visible' which no light can cheer. 'Dying wretch!' we say in imagination to each of these, 'is religion true? Do you believe in a God, and another life, and a retribution?' 'O yes!' he answers, and expires! But the righteous hath hope in his death. Contemplate, through the unnumbered saints that have died, the soul, the true and unextinguishable life of man, charmed away from this globe by the celestial music, already respiring the gales of eternity. If we could assemble in one view all the adoring addresses to Deity, all the declarations of faith in Jesus, all the gratulations of conscience, all the admonitions and benedictions to weeping friends, and all the gleams of opening glory; our souls would burn with the sentiment which made

the wicked Balaam devout for a moment, and exclaim, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.'

What an affecting scene is a dying world! Who is that destroying angel whom the Eternal has employed to sacrifice all our devoted race? Advancing onward over the whole field of time, he hath smitten the successive crowds of our hosts with death; and to us he now approaches nigh. Some of our friends have trembled, and sickened, and expired, at the signals of his coming. Already we hear the thunder of his wings. Soon his eye of fire will throw mortal fainting on all our companions. His prodigious form will to us blot out the sun, and his sword sweep us all from the earth; for 'the living know that they must die!'

I know not, I wonder how I shall succeed in mental improvement, and especially in religion. Oh! it is a difficult thing to be a Christian! I feel the necessity of reform through all my soul, when I retire into thought. I find myself environed by a crowd of impressive and awful images. I fix my ardent gaze on Christianity, assuredly the last best gift of Heaven to men; on Jesus, the agent and example of infinite love; on time as it passes away; on perfection, as it shines as beautiful as heaven, and alas! as remote; on my own beloved soul, which I have injured, and on the unhappy multitude of souls around me; and I ask

myself, Why do not my passions burn? why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath, to dash my icy habits to pieces, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust? At intervals I feel devotion and benevolence and a surpassing ardor; but when they are turned towards substantial, laborious occupations, they fly, and leave me spiritless amid the iron labor. Still, however, I confide in the efficacy of persistive prayer; and I do hope that the spirit of the Lord will yet come mightily upon me, and carry me through toils, and sufferings, and death, to stand in mount Zion among the followers of the Lamb.

REMARKS ON COWPER.

THE UNION OF DEVOTION AND TASTE.

BRAMAN.

COWPER was a Christian, and I doubt not that the devout spirit has often risen from the perusal of his strains, and, rapt in the holy elevation caught from this mingled flame of genius and piety, poured out the ecstasies of his soul for such a gift to religion. It has been the reproach or misfortune of its friends, that they have cramped its energies by scholastic definitions; that instead of letting its native attractions shine through the medium of

rich and elevated diction, they have, both from the pulpit and the press, disguised it by a quaint and pedantic phraseology. They have chilled its generous and lofty spirit, by narrow and spiritless and commonplace sentiment. This reproach can be, and ought to be, wiped off. The separation between taste and devotion is a most unnatural divorce. Cowper had a soul keenly alive to every beauty of nature and art; and religion, as invested with the charms of his poetry, never wore an earthly robe that shone so like its hue of original and celestial loveliness. Never dwelt there in a human being, a temper that mingled so kindly with the bland spirit of Christianity. It touched with its hallowed fire all the springs of his elegant taste; it breathed its inspiring vigor into all his innocent loves, till every element of his beautiful genius, like the scenes it described, wafted nothing but incense to heaven. What! shall man be attracted to every other of his interests, by the forms of a seductive rhetoric, and the power of a brilliant and fascinating imagery? shall genius pour forth its praises of nature, till the stars above us twinkle down with new lustre, and the whole earth wake to new beauty, as when it burst fresh from the bosom of almighty love? shall vice itself glitter in the magic of unwonted melody, and the heart be drunken with its sorceries? shall the God of heaven be blasphemed in colors dipped in his

own glory, and shall religion, the joy of angels, the dearest friend to humanity, the bright hope and vision of immortality, meet the naked selfishness of the heart without a grace to soften and conciliate? Must it contend, not only with the polished shafts of wit, the subtilties of depraved reason, and the host of mighty passions, but must it also wage unnatural war with those very refinements and sensibilities of our nature, which owe to it their purest nourishment and noblest elevation? It has done that for man which ought to fill every heart with enthusiasm. The prospects of its achievements are enough to open all the fountains of the soul; to make it break from its tame and proscribed impurity of diction; to pour around Christianity the light of every taste, and the charm of irresistible persuasion. Then, melting down every obstacle, it shall go forth conquering and to conquer, till every eye is ravished with its beauty, and every heart yields it the homage of veneration!

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE FEMALE SEX.

BUCKMINSTER.

WE come now to the period when the light of the gospel began to break upon the world, and woman was first raised to share with man the same destiny and duties, by being interested in the same redemption and the same hopes. The christian communities, in the first century, collected by a new and supernatural impulse, from the corruption and degradation of humanity in the pagan world, were early filled with women, who at once preached and practised, ennobled and recommended the new religion. In the course of a few years, the christian martyrologies are full of the names of female sufferers, who, for Jesus' sake, went to the stake, with all the courage and inflexibility of apostles.

But the effect of Christianity did not terminate in raising the armies of martyrs, with which the annals of the church are crowded. The truly important and permanent influence of Christianity, arose from the check which it gave to the licentiousness of divorce, and from the abolition of the practice of polygamy. By these sacred laws of the new dispensation, man and woman were raised from the abyss of depravity, in which they were

sunk together. By the prevalence of the gospel, it was soon understood, that the souls of your sex were of an origin as high, a value as precious, a destination as lofty, a duration as lasting, as our own. Woman then began to be the companion and the partner of man; the condition of domestic life was changed; and the household gods of the pagans were supplanted. It was understood to be one of the principles of Christianity, that, while man was the head of the woman, woman was the glory of the man; the unbelieving husband was sanctified by the wife, and the holy spirit had been poured, without distinction of sex, on the male and female converts. Not only was the bond of marriage fastened indissolubly by the force of religion, as well as by its laws, and woman delivered from the caprices of divorce, and the miseries of polygamy; but, by the introduction of the gospel, a new impulse was given to the ideas, and a new direction to the pursuits of the sex. They were not only pure maidens and faithful wives, but they became also, thinkers and students; apologists as well as martyrs for Christianity. Where the new faith was received, they often introduced it. They established it on the thrones of the northern nations, who were preparing to burst in upon the tottering empire of the West; and what our religion owes to them of its rapid extension, it abundantly repaid by its in-

fluence upon their condition. It was, in fact, the regeneration of one half of the human race. The life, liberty, talents, and virtues of mankind were doubled, as it were, by this wonderful moral renovation. New vigor was imparted to benevolence, and a new charm given to social life; a new spring to the energies of the human mind, and a new and celestial character to the religion of the world. While Christianity was accomplishing these benefits for the female sex, Mahometanism arose from the corruptions, which began to obscure and deprave it, and formed, at the same time, a contrast to the effects of the pure, original religion of Jesus. As the religion of Mahomet extended and established itself in Asia, it sealed forever the domestic slavery and relative degradation of women; while under the influence of Christianity, even in its degenerating form, the sex continued to ascend to the condition, which they now enjoy in Europe.

In fine, when we compare the condition of your sex, even under the present partial reign of [the christian faith, with their condition under the best form of paganism, it is not difficult to admit, that the gospel ought to have the honor of this renovation. There may be those, however, who are inclined to attribute these favorable changes to what they would call the influence of philosophy. If by this word is meant a philosophy

unenlightened by the gospel, the facts we have already adduced sufficiently refute the claim; for the progress of women, in the course of pagan refinement, was uniformly found to be from slavery to licentiousness. On this subject, we, at least, may be satisfied with that memorable acknowledgement of Rousseau, 'that philosophy has not been able to do any good, which religion could not have done better; and religion has done much which philosophy could not have done at all.' Or if by philosophy be meant the best modes of thinking which have prevailed in the most enlightened part of Christendom, or that mental cultivation to which modern Europe has attained, we must first determine what Christianity has done for all the true and sound philosophy which now exists, before we pretend to ascribe to the latter alone those blessings of modern times, which are comprised under the general name of civilization.

THE FEMALE PILGRIM.

WHITHER goest thou, Pilgrim Stranger,
 Passing through this darksome vale ?
 Know'st thou not 't is full of danger,
 And will not thy courage fail ?

Pilgrim thou dost justly call me,
 Wandering o'er this waste so wide ;
 Yet no harm will e'er befall me,
 While I 'm blest with such a Guide.

Such a guide ! no guide attends thee ;
 Hence for thee my fears arise ;
 If a guardian power befriends thee,
 'T is unseen by mortal eyes.

Yes, unseen ; but still, believe me,
 Such a Guide my steps attends ;
 He 'll in every strait relieve mé,
 He from every harm defends.

Pilgrim ! see that stream before thee,
 Darkly winding through the vale ;
 Should its deadly waves roll o'er thee,
 Would not then thy courage fail ?

No ! that stream has nothing frightful ;
 To its brink my steps I 'll bend ;
 Thence to plunge will be delightful ;
 There my pilgrimage will end.

While I gazed, with speed surprising,
Down the stream she plunged from sight ;
Gazing still, I saw her rising,
Like an angel, clothed with light.

THE FOLLY OF PRIDING OURSELVES UPON HUMAN ESTEEM.

BUCKMINSTER.

THE excessive value which we may be inclined to put upon human estimation, must be diminished, whenever we seriously examine ourselves in the following manner. For what am I now esteemed? Perhaps for the very quality of which I possess the least. The world sees me only in public, when I am all upon my guard, when I have put on my most showy and agreeable dress, when I have taken pains to conceal the deformities of my heart, and to patch up the imperfections of my understanding. But when I retire into my closet, I see at once, that I have been flattered. This man's attention I won by affected complaisance; another's complacency I secured by luckily coinciding with his peculiar passion or prejudice. As to my talents, one man mistook my silence for wisdom; another, my fluency for knowledge; one was caught by some superficial display of my wit; another formed his conclusions of my powers from my accidental superiority to him in a particular instance. As to my disposition, no man knows how many passions prey upon me in secret; how many contests there are going on between malevolence and fear, between hatred and politeness;

no man can see the workings of my passions, or estimate the difficulty which I find in preserving agreeable appearances. When I consider, too, how incompetent are many of the judges of my character, how subject are my friends to prejudice, and the multitude to blind admiration, I cannot but fear, lest I should appreciate too highly a reputation, which is built upon the ignorance of some, and the prejudice of others of my fellow creatures.

Another consideration, which ought to diminish our desire of human estimation, is the excessive uncertainty of the favor of the world. It is uncertain, because it may be lost by our own inadvertencies. The fair character, which years may have been polishing and whitening, may be blasted in a moment of imprudence. The proud reputation of talents or of wit, may be lost in an hour of forgetfulness, of weakness, or of low spirits. Nay more, the monument of our fame may tumble over in an instant, even by our rash endeavours to build it too high. How often has a trifling mistake, or a casual impropriety, precipitated a popular idol from his seat in the admiration of the multitude. We may lose our reputation by our ignorance, indeed, more easily than by our fault. But even if we were in no danger from ourselves, if we were sure of always deserving the credit which we at any time possess, consider how fickle

in itself is the opinion of mankind. They rush forever into opposite extremes. Let us, then, anticipate their changes. Let us become indifferent to them, before they become indifferent to us. The world cannot long endure to admire. Admiration is an exertion of the mind which fatigues; and even if it were as easy to continue to admire, as to love or to approve, the passion must at length be exhausted. What we look at for any length of time infallibly becomes familiar; and what has become familiar, no longer excites admiration. 'No man appears great,' says a severe moralist, 'no man appears great to his domestics.' But even if it were not the natural tendency of great worldly renown gradually to exhaust itself, yet when we consider, how many are envious of eminence which they cannot reach, and how many hate the goodness which they cannot imitate, when we consider that thousands, whose favorable opinion would not enhance our reputation, are yet able to blast it in a moment by falsehood, by treachery, or insinuation, let us sit loose to the opinion of the world, and seek the honor that cometh from God only.

We have seen, that this regard to human estimation, though a principle of universal, I had almost said, infinite influence, is confined to very narrow limits in the gospel of Christ. Is there nothing, then, provided to supply the place of so

powerful an agent in the formation of human character? Is there nothing left to awaken the ambition of the Christian, to rouse him from sloth and universal indifference, to call forth the energies of his mind, and to urge him forward in the career of holiness? Yes; if we will listen to the language of an apostle, whose history proclaims that his passions were not asleep, that his emulation was not quenched by the profession of Christianity, and whose spirit ever glowed with a most divine enthusiasm; I say, if we listen to him, we shall find that there is enough to stimulate all the faculties of the soul, and finally to satiate the most burning thirst of glory. Yes, my friends, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God has prepared for them that love him. Yes, my friends, our whole progress here, through all the varieties of honor and dishonor, of evil report and good report, is a spectacle to angels and to men. We are coming into an innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to God the judge of all. These have been the spectators of our course, and from such are we to receive glory, and honor, and immortality.

Wouldst thou, then, Christian—allow me to quote an eloquent exhortation from a most pious

writer—'Wouldst thou reduce this love of human estimation under just control? Rise on the wings of contemplation, until the praise and the censures of men die away upon the ear, and the still small voice of conscience is no longer drowned by the din of this nether world. Here the sight is apt to be occupied with earthly objects, and the hearing to be engrossed with earthly sounds; but there shalt thou come within the view of that resplendent and incorruptible crown, which is held forth to thy acceptance in the realms of light, and thine ear shall be regaled with heavenly melody. Here we dwell in a variable atmosphere; the prospect is at one time darkened by the gloom of disgrace, and at another, the eye is dazzled by the gleamings of glory; but thou hast now ascended above this inconstant region; no storms agitate, no clouds obscure the air, and the lightnings play and the thunders roll beneath thee.'*

* Wilberforce.

ACCOUNT OF JUGGERNAUT,
A HINDOO IDOL.

BUCHANAN.

I HAVE returned home from witnessing a scene which I shall never forget. At twelve o'clock of this day, being the great day of the feast, the Moloch of Hindoostan was brought out of his temple amidst the acclamations of hundreds of thousands of his worshippers. When the idol was placed on his throne, a shout was raised by the multitude, such as I had never heard before. It continued equable for a few minutes, and then gradually died away. After a short interval of silence, a murmur was heard at a distance; all eyes were turned towards the place, and behold a grove advancing. A body of men, having green branches or palms in their hands, approached with great celerity. The people opened a way for them; and when they had come up to the throne, they fell down before him that sat thereon, and worshipped. And the multitude again sent forth a voice 'like the sound of a great thunder.' But the voices I now heard, were not those of melody or of joyful acclamation; for there is no harmony in the praise of Moloch's worshippers. Their number indeed brought to my mind the countless multitude of the Revelation; but their voices gave no

tuneful Hosannah or Hallelujah ; but rather a yell of approbation, united with a kind of hissing applause. I was at a loss how to account for this latter noise, until I was directed to notice the women, who emitted a sound like that of whistling, with the lips circular and the tongue vibrating, as if a serpent would speak by their organs, uttering human sounds.

The throne of the idol was placed on a stupendous car or tower about sixty feet in height, resting on wheels which indented the ground deeply, as they turned slowly under the ponderous machine. Attached to it were six cables, of the size and length of a ship's cable, by which the people drew it along. Upon the tower were the priests and satellites of the idol, surrounding his throne. The idol is a block of wood, having a frightful visage painted black, with a distended mouth of a bloody color. His arms are of gold, and he is dressed in gorgeous apparel. The other two idols are of a white and yellow color. Five elephants preceded the three towers, bearing towering flags, dressed in crimson caparisons, and having bells hanging to their caparisons, which sounded musically as they proceeded.

I went on in the procession, close by the tower of Moloch, which, as it was drawn with difficulty, grated on its massy wheels harsh thunder. After a few minutes it stopped ; and now the worship of the

god began. A high priest mounted the car in front of the idol, and pronounced his obscene stanzas in the ears of the people, who responded at intervals in the same strain. 'These songs,' said he, 'are the delight of the god. His car can only move when he is pleased with the song.' The car moved on a little way, and then stopped. A boy of about twelve years of age was then brought forth to attempt something yet more lascivious, if peradventure the god would move. The child perfected the praise of the idol with such ardent expression and gesture, that the god was pleased, and the multitude, emitting a sensual yell of delight, urged the car along. After a few minutes it stopped again. An aged minister of the idol then stood up, and with a long rod in his hand, which he moved with indecent action, completed the variety of this disgusting exhibition. I felt a consciousness of doing wrong in witnessing it. I was also somewhat appalled at the magnitude and horror of the spectacle; I felt like a guilty person, on whom all eyes are fixed, and I was about to withdraw. But a scene of a different kind was now to be presented. The characteristics of Moloch's worship are obscenity and blood. We have seen the former. Now comes the blood.

After the tower had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down

in the road before the tower as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forwards. The multitude passed round him, leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to smile when the libation of the blood is made. The people threw cowries, or small money, on the body of the victim, in approbation of the deed. He was left to view a considerable time, and was then carried by the Hurries to the Golgotha, where I have just been viewing his remains.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD.

BOSSUET.

I SHALL not dwell upon the mistaken notion which even the apostles affixed to the character of the Messiah, but shall endeavour to explain the sentiments which the holy Jesus entertained upon that subject. I cannot observe without an emotion of astonishment, the conduct of the Son of God in this particular; I see him through the course of his ministry displaying, even with parade, the lowliness of his condition; and when the hour approaches which is to terminate in his death, the word glory dwells on his lips, and he dis-

courses with his disciples of nothing but his greatness. On the eve of his ignominious death, when the traitor Judas had just gone from him, big with his execrable intention, it was then the Saviour of the world cried out with a divine ardor, 'Now is the Son of Man glorified!' Tell me in what manner is he going to be glorified? what means the emphatic word now? Is he to rise above the clouds, and from thence to launch vengeance on his foes? or is the angelic hierarchy, seraphs, dominations, principalities, and powers to descend from on high and pay him instant adoration? Ah, no! he is going to be degraded, to submit to excruciating pain, and to expire with malefactors. This is what he denominates his glory; this is what he esteems his triumph. Behold him as he makes his entrance into Jerusalem, riding on an ass. Ah, Christians, let us not be ashamed of our heavenly king; let the sceptic, the deist, deride, if they please, this humble appearance of the Son of God; but I will tell human arrogance, that this lowly exhibition was worthy of the king who came into this world in order to degrade, to crush beneath his feet all terrestrial grandeur! I do not mean, however, to call your attention to this point. Behold! behold! what a concourse of people of all ages, of all conditions, precede his entrance into Jerusalem, with branches of palm trees in their hands,

in the act of exultation! How the air resounds with these acclamations; 'Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest!' Whence is this sudden change, so opposite to his former conduct? Whence is it that he now courts applause, whom we see, in another part of the Gospel, retiring to the summit of a solitary mountain, to escape from the solicitations of the multitude, who assembled from all the neighbouring cities and villages, for the purpose of electing him their king? He now listens with complacency to the people, who accost him with that title. The jealous Pharisees endeavour to impose silence on the multitude; but our Saviour replies, 'If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.' Let me again repeat, whence is this abrupt conduct? He approves of what he lately abhorred; he accepts what he lately rejected. The last time he entered Jerusalem, it was in order to die; and in consonance with the sentiments of the Messiah, to die is to reign. How dignified was his conduct through the whole process of his passion! How august his deportment at the tribunal of Pilate! Did he not humble the majesty of the Roman by the dignity of silence? Let Pilate return into the judgment hall, for the purpose of interrogating our Saviour; he will make no reply, but to one question; the Roman presi-

dent, says, 'Art thou a king?' The Son of God, who had disdained to utter any answer to the other questions of his judge, no sooner heard his title to royalty mentioned, than he abruptly replies, 'Thou sayest that I am a king; to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.' Yes! I comprehend you, oh my Saviour, oh my king! It is your glory to suffer for the love of your people, and you will not claim the sceptre, till you are going, by the means of a victorious death, to deliver your subjects from eternal slavery. Let heaven and earth burst forth into a song of praise. You, oh faithful and happy subjects of the Saviour king, you, who have been regained and conquered to his protection at so high a price; what gratitude, what loyalty, what affection can ever repay the magnitude of such a benefit? It is not the palace, the throne, the gorgeous accomplishments of royalty, that lead my imagination captive. But when I behold, in whatever country, a whole people expecting and receiving liberty from the hand of a monarch; when I view a civilized state; when I see the land cultivated; when I see the freedom of the ocean unrestrained; when I see every person living unmolested beneath his peaceful roof; when I behold the rays of royalty, like the sunbeams, darting their salutary influence over the remotest part of the king-

dom, then, then, my understanding moves a willing captive round the glorious spectacle. Send now your capacious view over the whole globe, and you will find that the dispensation of blessings, so profusely scattered, and so widely disseminated, is the gift of our celestial king.

THE CHARACTERS OF
MARTHA AND MARY.

DAVIES.

MARTHA, though a pious woman, yet like too many among us, was too solicitous about worldly things. She seemed more concerned to maintain her reputation for good economy and hospitality, than to improve in divine knowledge at every opportunity; and to entertain her guest rather as a gentleman than as a divine teacher and the saviour of souls. Hence, instead of sitting at his feet with her sister, in the posture of a humble disciple, she was busy in making preparations, and her mind was distracted with the cares of her family. As moderate labor and care about earthly things is lawful, and even a duty, persons are not readily suspicious or easily convinced of their guilty excesses in these labors and cares. Hence Martha is so far from condemning herself on this account, that she blames her devout sister for not

following her example. Nay, she has the confidence to complain to Christ himself of her rude neglect, and that in language, too, that sounds somewhat rude and irreverent; 'Carest thou not that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Art thou so partial as to suffer her to devolve all the trouble upon me, while she sits idle at thy feet?'

Jesus turns upon her with a just severity, and throws the blame where it should lie. 'Martha! Martha!' there is a vehemence and pungency in the repetition, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. Thy worldly mind has many objects, and many objects excite many cares and troubles, fruitless troubles and useless cares. Thy restless mind is scattered among a thousand things, and tossed from one to another with an endless variety of anxieties. But let me collect thy thoughts and cares to one point, a point where they should all terminate. One thing is needful; and therefore dropping thy excessive care about many things, make this one thing the great object of thy pursuit. The one thing is what thy sister is now attending to, while thou art vainly careful about many things; and therefore, instead of blaming her conduct, I must approve it. She has made the best choice, for she hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. After all thy care and labor, the things of this vain world must be given up at last, and

lost forever. But Mary hath made a wiser choice ; the portion she hath chosen shall be hers forever.'

But what does Christ mean by this one thing which alone is needful ?

I answer, we may learn what he meant, by the occasion and circumstances of his speaking. He mentions this one thing in an admonition to Martha for excessive worldly cares and the neglect of an opportunity for promoting her salvation, and he expressly opposes this one thing to the many things which engrossed her care ; and therefore it must mean something different from, and superior to, all the pursuits of time. This one thing is that which Mary was so much concerned about, while attentively listening to his instructions. And what can that be but salvation as the end, and holiness as the means, or a proper care of the soul ? This is that which is opposite and superior to the many cares of life ; this is that which Mary was attending to and pursuing ; and, I may add, this is that good part which Mary had chosen, which should not be taken away from her ; for that good part which Mary had chosen seems intended by Christ to explain what he meant by the one thing needful. Therefore the one thing needful must mean the salvation of the soul, and an earnest application to the means necessary to obtain this end, above all other things in the world. To be holy in order to be happy ; to pray, to hear,

to meditate, and use all the means of grace appointed to produce or cherish holiness in us; to use these means with constancy, frequency, earnestness, and zeal; to use them diligently, whatever else be neglected, or to make all other things give way in comparison to this; this, I apprehend, is the one thing needful which Christ here intends; this is that which is absolutely necessary; necessary above all other things, and necessary for ever. The end, namely, salvation, will be granted by all to be necessary, and the necessity of the end renders the means also necessary. If it be necessary you should be forever happy, and escape everlasting misery, it is necessary you should be holy; for you can no more be saved without holiness, than you can be healthy without health, see without light, or live without food. And if holiness be necessary, then the earnest use of the means appointed for the production and improvement of holiness in us, must be necessary too; for you can no more expect to become holy, without the use of these means, than to reap without sowing, or become truly virtuous and good, by chance or fatality. To be holy in order to be happy, and to use all the means of grace, in order to be holy, is, therefore, the one thing needful.

ETERNITY AND TIME.

DAVIES.

TIME is the duration of creatures in the present state. It commenced at the creation, and near six thousand years of it are since elapsed; and how much of it yet remains we know not. But this we know, that the duration of the world itself is as nothing in comparison of eternity. But what is our duration compared with the duration even of this world? It is but a span, an hair's breadth; sixty, seventy, or eighty years, is generally the highest standard of human life, and it is by far the smallest number of mankind that arrive at those periods. The most of them are like a flower blasted in the morning, or at noon; and we have more reason to expect it will be our fate than to hope the contrary. Now the span of time we enjoy in life is all our time; we have no more property in the rest of it, than in the years before the flood. All beside is eternity. Eternity! We are alarmed at the sound! lost in the prospect! Eternity with respect to God, is a duration without beginning as well as without end. This is inalienably entailed upon us, poor dying worms; and let us survey our inheritance. Eternity! it is a duration that excludes all number and computation; days, and months, and years, yea, and ages,

are lost in it, like drops in the ocean. Millions of millions of years, as many years as there are sands on the sea shore, or particles of dust in the globe of the earth, and those multiplied to the highest reach of number, all these are nothing to eternity. They do not bear the least imaginable proportion to it, for these will come to an end. It is a line without end ; it is an ocean without a shore. Alas ! what shall I say of it ! It is an infinite unknown something, that neither human thought can grasp, nor human language describe.

Now place time in comparison with eternity, and what is it ? It shrinks into nothing, and less than nothing. What is that little span of time in which we have any property ? Alas ! it is too diminutive a point to be conceived. Indeed, properly speaking, we can call no part of time our own but the present moment, this fleeting now ; future time is uncertain, and we may never enjoy it ; the breath we now respire may be our last ; and as to our past time, it is gone, and will never be ours again.

RECOLLECTIONS.

BARTON.

Oh, there are hours, aye, moments, that contain
 Feelings, that years may pass and never bring ;
 Which, whether fraught with pleasure or with pain,
 Can hardly be forgot ; as if the wing
 Of time, while passing o'er, had power to fling
 A darkening shade, or tint of happier hue,
 To which fond memory faithfully should cling
 In after life ; I felt, and owned it true,
 While I stood still, and looked upon the moonlight view.

I thought of some, who once beheld, like me,
 The peaceful prospect then before me spread ;
 And its still loveliness appeared to be
 One of those visions morning slumbers shed
 Upon the pensive mourner's pillowed head ;
 Its beauties, less distinct, but far more dear,
 Seemed to invoke the absent and the dead,
 And by some spell to bring the former near,
 Although it could not call the latter from their sphere !

Nor did I wish it. No, dear Mary, no !
 How could I ever wish thou shouldst resign,
 For any bliss this being can bestow,
 Pleasures eternal, deathless, and divine ?
 Yet, when I saw the pale moon coldly shine
 On the same paths and turf which thou hadst trod,
 Forgive my vain regret ! Yet, why repine ?

Its beams sleep sweetly on thy peaceful sod,
And thou thyself hast sought thy Father, and thy God !

For thou wert numbered with the ' pure in heart,'
Whom Christ pronounced blessed ! and to thee,
When thou wast summoned from this world to part,
We well may hope the promised boon would be
Vouchsafed in mercy, that thy soul should see
Him, whom the angelic hosts of heaven adore ;
And from each frailty of our nature free,
Which clogged that gentle spirit heretofore,
Exulting sing His praise, who lives forevermore !

MEANS OF PRODUCING CONTENTEDNESS.

J. TAYLOR.

1. WHEN any thing happens to our displeasure, let us endeavour to take off its trouble by turning it into spiritual or artificial advantage, and handle it on that side in which it may be useful to the designs of reason. For there is nothing but hath a double handle, or at least, we have two hands to apprehend it. When an enemy reproaches us, let us look on him as an impartial relater of our faults, for he will tell the truer than thy fond friend will; and thou mayst call them precious balm though they break thy head, and forgive his anger while thou makest use of the plainness of his declamation. The ox when he is weary treads surest; and if there be nothing else in the disgrace, but that it makes us to walk warily, and tread sure for fear of our enemies, that is better than to be flattered into pride and carelessness. This is the charity of christian philosophy, which expounds the sense of the divine providence fairly, and reconciles us to it by a charitable construction; and we may as well refuse all physic, if we consider it only as unpleasant to the taste; and we may find fault with the rich vallies of

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Tharsus, because they are circled by sharp mountains; but so also we may be in charity with every unpleasant accident, because, though it taste bitter, it is intended for health and medicine.

If therefore thou fallest from thy employment in public, take sanctuary in an honest retirement, being indifferent to thy gain abroad, or thy safety at home. If thou art out of favor with thy prince, secure the favor of the King of kings, and then there is no harm come to thee. And when Zeno Citiensis lost all his goods in a storm, he retired to the studies of philosophy, to his short cloak and severe life, and gave thanks to fortune for his prosperous mischance. When the north wind blows hard, and it rains sadly, none but fools sit down in it and cry; wise people defend themselves against it with a warm garment, or a good fire, and a dry roof; when a storm of a sad mischance beats upon our spirits, turn it into some advantage, by observing where it can serve another end, either of religion or prudence, or more safety or less envy; it will turn into something that is good, if we list to make it so; at least, it may make us weary of the world's vanity, and take off our confidence from uncertain riches, and make our spirits to dwell in those regions where content dwells essentially. If it does any good to our souls, it hath made more than sufficient recompense for all the temporal affliction. He

that threw a stone at a dog and hit his cruel step-mother, said, that although he intended it otherwise, yet the stone was not quite lost ; and if we fail in the first design, if we bring it home to another equally to content us, or more to profit us, then we have put our conditions past the power of chance ; and this was called in the old Greek comedy, a being revenged on fortune by becoming philosophers, and turning the chance into reason or religion ; for so a wise man shall overrule his stars, and have a greater influence upon his own content than all the constellations and planets of the firmament.

2. Never compare thy condition with those above thee ; but to secure thy content, look upon those thousands with whom thou wouldst not for any interest, change thy fortune and condition. A soldier must not think himself unprosperous, if he be not successful as the son of Philip, or cannot grasp a fortune as big as the Roman empire. Be content that thou art not lessened as was Pyrrhus ; or if thou beest, that thou art not routed like Crassus ; and when that comes to thee, it is a great prosperity that thou art not caged and mad, a spectacle like Bajazet, or thy eyes were not pulled out like Zedekiah's, or that thou wert not flayed alive like Valentinian. If thou admirest the greatness of Xerxes, look also on those who digged the mountain Atho, or whose ears and

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noses were cut off, because the Hellespont carried away the bridge. It is a fine thing, thou thinkest, to be carried on men's shoulders; but give God thanks that thou art not forced to carry a rich fool upon thy shoulders, as those poor men do whom thou beholdest. There are but a few kings in mankind, but many thousands who are very miserable if compared to thee; however, it is a huge folly rather to grieve for the good of others, than to rejoice for that good which God hath given us of our own.

And yet there is no wise or good man that would change persons or conditions entirely with any man in the world. It may be he would have one man's wealth added to himself, or the power of a second, or the learning of a third; but still he would receive these into his own person, because he loves that best, and therefore esteems it best, and therefore overvalues all that which he is, before all that which any other man in the world can be. Would any be Dives to have his wealth, or Judas for his office, or Saul for his kingdom, or Absalom for his beauty, or Ahithophel for his policy? It is likely he would wish all these, and yet he would be the same person still. For every man hath desires of his own, and objects first fitted to them, without which he cannot be, unless he were not himself. And let every man that loves himself so well as to love himself

before all the world, consider if he have not something for which in the whole he values himself far more than he can value any one else. There is therefore no reason to take the finest feathers from all the winged nation to deck that bird that thinks already she is more valuable than any one of the inhabitants of the air. Either change all or none. Cease to love yourself best, or be content with that portion of being and blessing, for which you love yourself so well.

THE GRADUAL PROGRESS OF EVIL.

VENN.

It is a great point of wisdom, to know how to estimate little things. Of those which are evidently great, every one can see the importance; but true wisdom looks at these great objects before they have arrived at their full size. She considers, that it is principally in this earlier state that they come under the power of man, and can be arranged, modified, increased, or extinguished, at his pleasure; whereas, in a more advanced stage, they set at defiance all his efforts. On the contrary, it is the part of folly to wait till evils have attained their maturity before they are attacked; for then that which might at first have been easily crushed, becomes irresistible.

Behold a conflagration! With what dreadful fury it rages! The largest houses are devoured by it in a moment. The strongest fall victims to its uncontrollable power. Yet this fire, which now resists the united wisdom and power of man, originated from a small spark, and might at first have been extinguished by a child.

Look also at yonder tree, which is now so firmly rooted in the earth, which rears its lofty head so high, and bears its flourishing honors so thick upon it! It was once only a small seed; it was then a tender plant, so slender and so weak, that the foot of accident might have crushed it, the overshadowing of a weed might have suffocated it, or the hand of negligence or wantonness have torn it up. Thus does nature point out to us the growth of the strongest things from weak and almost imperceptible beginnings.

Behold also the traveller. He is at a long distance from the end of his journey. A step seems to be of no consequence to him. For what is a step, compared with the many miles which he has to travel? But it is by these successive steps he is carried on, till at last he arrives at his desired home. Mountains, vallies, and plains, the prospect of which even fatigues the eye, are all at length surmounted by the constant application of those little steps, which appear at first to bear no proportion to the immeasurable distance.

Such a stress does the established order of nature teach us to lay upon little things. And if we look into the moral world, we shall find that they are not there to be considered as of less importance.

Behold an abandoned and hardened murderer, who is about to receive from the hands of public justice the ignominious punishment due to his crimes! You survey with terror and astonishment his vice; you are shocked while you consider his daring profligacy, his furious passions, his avowed defiance of God and man, his hardness of heart, and his universal depravity. Would you know by what means he arrived at such a dreadful pitch of sin? It was one little step taken after another, which brought him to it. He began by neglecting the worship of God, proceeded to breaking the sabbath, resisted the remonstrances of conscience, indulged his passions without constraint; to gratify them, he pilfered and stole; one act led to another; till at length he became such a monster of criminality, that it was no longer consistent with the safety of mankind that he should be permitted to live.' But would you know what was the seed which produced this evil fruit, what was the principle which uniformly operated upon him, and induced him to risk the loss of his wealth, his reputation, and his life? It was this, the desire of present gratification. Yes,

it was this, which is thought of no consequence by almost all mankind; which is even cherished by many as the chief source of pleasure; which, when it once prevails and overcomes the bounds of reason and religion, produces those dreadful effects that leave no hope of amendment, and almost necessarily terminate in irresistible ruin. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

Contemplate also the unhappy woman, whose licentious conduct has banished her from the society of her own sex, and whose scandalous profligacy and shameless impudence make her shunned by all but the most worthless of the other. In her countenance and conduct appears not so much as a simple trace of the amiable graces which should characterize her sex. See her brought to a state of sin, which excites disgust even in the wicked; and to a state of misery, shame, poverty, and ruin, which shock even the hardest heart! To what shall we attribute this dreadful accumulation of crime and wretchedness? What powerful cause has produced it? Perhaps it may have been one, the evil of which is little suspected. It is, indeed, a small spark which kindleth such a fire. It may have been only the love of admiration. That vanity which is seldom considered as any crime, which is even cherished while it does not become immoderate, as being in some respects pleasing; that vanity

which teaches the arts of captivating, which studies the effect of dress, and is employed in adorning and decking the person; that vanity is the author of this wide extended ruin. It is the little seed from which it has grown and arrived to such dreadful luxuriance. It is true, it does not always produce such deplorable effects; but we are to consider its tendency, if it were not restrained and counteracted as it generally is. The fear of shame, the opposition of better principles, the authority of those who are revered or dreaded, the clashing of selfinterest or evil passions, or the wholesome discipline of adversity, check, in many cases, its luxuriance, and stifle its growth; so that its proper tendency and effect are not discerned. Still the eye of wisdom, and the light of religion, discover them, and show all the evils which afterwards may appear, if circumstances are favorable to their growth; which are already contained in it, and, if suffered to expand, will presently shoot forth and bear fruit.

CALAMITIES OF WAR.

R. HALL.

THOUGH we must all die, as the woman of Te-ko-a said, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up; yet it is impossible

for a human mind to contemplate the rapid extinction of innumerable lives without concern. To perish in a moment, to be hurried instantaneously, without preparation and without warning, into the presence of the Supreme Judge, has something in it inexpressibly awful and affecting. Since the commencement of those hostilities which are now so happily closed, it may be reasonably conjectured that not less than half a million of our fellow creatures have fallen a sacrifice. Half a million of beings, sharers of the same nature, warmed with the same hopes, and as fondly attached to life as ourselves, have been prematurely swept into the grave; each of whose deaths has pierced the heart of a wife, a parent, a brother, or a sister! How many of these scenes of complicated distress have occurred since the commencement of hostilities, is known only to Omniscience; that they are innumerable cannot admit of a doubt. In some parts of Europe, perhaps, there is scarcely a family exempt.

Though the whole race of man is doomed to dissolution, and we are all hastening to our long home; yet at each successive moment, life and death seem to divide betwixt them the dominion of mankind, and life to have the larger share. It is otherwise in war; death reigns there without a rival and without control. War is the work, the element, or rather the sport and triumph of death,

who glories, not only with the extent of his conquest, but in the richness of his spoil. In the other methods of attack, in the other forms which death assumes, the feeble and the aged, who at the best can live but a short time, are usually the victims; here it is the vigorous and the strong. It is remarked by the most ancient of poets, that in peace children bury their parents, in war parents bury their children; nor is the difference small. Children lament their parents, sincerely, indeed, but with that moderate and tranquil sorrow, which it is natural for those to feel, who are conscious of retaining many tender ties, many animating prospects. Parents mourn for their children with the bitterness of despair; the aged parent, the widowed mother, loses, when she is deprived of her children, every thing but the capacity of suffering; her heart, withered and desolate, admits no other object, cherishes no other hope. It is Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are not.

But to confine our attention to the number of the slain, would give us a very inadequate idea of the ravages of the sword. The lot of those who perish instantaneously may be considered, apart from religious prospects, as comparatively happy, since they are exempt from those lingering diseases and slow torments to which others are liable. We cannot see an individual expire, though

a stranger or an enemy, without being sensibly moved, and prompted by compassion to lend him every assistance in our power. Every trace of resentment vanishes in a moment, every other emotion gives way to pity and terror. In these last extremities we remember nothing but the respect and tenderness due to our common nature. What a scene then must a field of battle present, where thousands are left without assistance, without pity, with their wounds exposed to the piercing air, whilst blood, freezing as it flows, binds them to the earth, amidst the trampling of horses, and the insults of an enraged foe! If they are spared by the humanity of the enemy, and carried from the field, it is but a prolongation of torment. Conveyed in uneasy vehicles, often to a remote distance, through roads almost impassable, they are lodged in ill prepared receptacles for the wounded and the sick, where the variety of distress baffles all the efforts of humanity and skill, and renders it impossible to give to each the attention he demands. Far from their native home, no tender assiduities of friendship, no well known voice, no wife, or mother, or sister, is near to sooth their sorrows, relieve their thirst, or close their eyes in death. Unhappy man! and must you be swept into the grave unnoticed and unnumbered, and no friendly tear be shed for your sufferings, or mingled with your dust?

We must remember, however, that as a very small proportion of a military life is spent in actual combat, so it is a very small part of its miseries which must be ascribed to this source. More are consumed by the rust of inactivity than by the edge of the sword; confined to a scanty or unwholesome diet, exposed in sickly climates, harassed with tiresome marches and perpetual alarms, their life is a continual scene of hardships and dangers. They grow familiar with hunger, cold, and watchfulness. Crowded into hospitals and prisons, contagion spreads amongst their ranks, till the ravages of disease exceed those of the enemy.

PIETY IN THE FEMALE SEX.

WILBERFORCE.

To a considerate and feeling mind, there is something deeply afflicting in seeing the engaging cheerfulness and cloudless gaiety incident to youth, welcomed as a sufficient indication of internal purity by the delighted parents, who, knowing the deceitfulness of these flattering appearances, should eagerly avail themselves of this period, when once wasted never to be regained, of good humored acquiescence, and dutiful docility; a period when the soft and ductile temper of the

mind renders it more easily susceptible of the impression we desire, and when, therefore, habits should be formed, which may assist our natural weakness to resist the temptations to which we shall be exposed in the commerce of maturer life. This is more especially affecting in the female sex, because that sex seems, by the very constitution of its nature, to be more favorably disposed than ours to the feelings and offices of religion; being thus fitted by the bounty of Providence, the better to execute the important task which devolves on it, of the education of our youth. Doubtless, this more favorable disposition to religion in the female sex, was graciously designed also to make women doubly valuable in the wedded state; and it seems to afford to the married man the means of rendering an active share in the business of life more compatible, than it would otherwise be, with the liveliest devotional feelings; that when the husband should return to his family, worn and harassed by worldly cares or professional labors, the wife, habitually preserving a warmer and more unimpaired spirit of devotion, than is perhaps consistent with being immersed in the bustle of life, might revive his languid piety, and the religious impressions of both might receive new force and tenderness from the animating sympathies of conjugal affection. Can a more pleasing image be presented to a considerate mind, than that of a couple, happy

in each other, and in the pledges of their mutual love, uniting in an act of grateful adoration to the Author of all their mercies; recommending each other, and the objects of their common care, to the divine protection; and repressing the solicitude of conjugal and parental tenderness by a confiding hope, that, through all the changes of this uncertain life, the Disposer of all things will assuredly cause all to work together for the good of them that love and put their trust in him; and that, after this uncertain state shall have passed away, they shall be admitted to a joint participation of never ending happiness? It is surely no mean or ignoble office which we would allot to the female sex, when we would thus commit to them the charge of maintaining in lively exercise whatever emotions most dignify and adorn human nature; when we would make them as it were the medium of our intercourse with the heavenly world, the faithful repositories of the religious principle, for the benefit both of the present and of the rising generation. Must it not then excite our grief and indignation, when we behold mothers, forgetful at once of their own peculiar duties, and of the high office which Providence designed their daughters to fulfil; exciting, instead of endeavouring to moderate in them, the natural sanguineness and inconsiderateness of youth; hurrying them night after night to the resorts of dissipation; thus teaching them

to despise the common comforts of the family circle, and, instead of striving to raise their views, and to direct their affections to their true object, acting as if with the express design studiously to extinguish every spark of a devotional spirit, and to kindle in its stead an excessive love of pleasure, and, perhaps, a principle of extravagant vanity and ardent emulation.

ON AMUSEMENTS.

WILBERFORCE.

RELIGION prohibits no amusement or gratification which is really innocent. The question, however, of its innocence, must not be tried by the loose maxims of worldly morality, but by the spirit of the injunctions of the word of God, and by the indulgence being conformable or not conformable to the genius of Christianity, and to the tempers and dispositions of mind enjoined on its professors. There can be no dispute concerning the true end of recreations. They are intended to refresh our exhausted bodily or mental powers, and to restore us, with renewed vigor, to the more serious occupations of life. Whatever, therefore, fatigues either mind or body, instead of refreshing them, is not fitted to answer the designed purpose. What-

ever consumes more time, or money, or thought, than it is expedient, I might say necessary, to allot to mere amusement, can hardly be approved by any one, who considers these talents as precious deposits, for the expenditure of which he will have to give an account. Whatever directly or indirectly must be likely to injure the welfare of a fellow creature, can scarcely be a suitable recreation for a Christian, who is to love his neighbour as himself; or a very consistent diversion for any one, the business of whose life is to diffuse happiness.

But does a Christian never relax? Let us not so wrong and vilify the bounty of Providence, as to allow for a moment that the sources of innocent amusement are so rare, that men must be driven, almost by constraint, to such as are of a doubtful quality. On the contrary, such has been the Creator's goodness, that almost every one, both of our physical, and intellectual and moral faculties, and the same may be said of the whole creation which we see around us, is not only calculated to answer the proper end of its being, by its subserviency to some purpose of solid usefulness, but to be the instrument of administering pleasure. Our Maker also, in his kindness, has so constructed us, that even mere vicissitude is grateful and refreshing; a consideration which should prompt us often to seek, from a prudent variation of useful pursuits,

that recreation, for which we are apt to resort to what is altogether unproductive and useless. Yet rich and multiplied are the springs of innocent relaxation. The Christian relaxes in the temperate use of all the gifts of Providence. Imagination, and taste, and genius, and the beauties of creation, and the works of art, lie open to him. He relaxes in the feast of reason, in the intercourses of society, in the sweets of friendship, in the endearments of love, in the exercise of hope, of confidence, of joy, of gratitude, of universal good will, of all the benevolent and generous affections, which, by the generous ordination of our Creator, while they disinterestedly intend only happiness to others, are most surely productive to ourselves of complacency and peace. Oh! little do they know of the true measure of enjoyment, who can compare these delightful complacencies with the frivolous pleasures of dissipation, or the coarse gratifications of sensuality. It is no wonder, however, that the nominal Christian should reluctantly give up one by one, the pleasures of the world, and look back upon them, when relinquished, with eyes of wistfulness and regret, because he knows not the sweetness of the delights with which true Christianity repays those trifling sacrifices, and is generally unacquainted with the nature of that pleasantness which is to be found in the ways of religion. It is indeed true, that when any one,

who has long been going on in the gross and unrestrained practice of vice, is checked in his career, and enters at first on a religious course, he has much to undergo. Fear, guilt, remorse, shame, and various other passions, struggle and conflict with him. His appetites are clamorous for their accustomed gratification, and inveterate habits are scarcely to be denied. He is weighed down by a load of guilt, and almost overwhelmed by a sense of his unworthiness. But all this ought in fairness to be charged to the account of his past sins, and not to that of his present repentance. It rarely happens, however, that this state of suffering continues very long. When the mental gloom is the blackest, a ray of heavenly light occasionally breaks in, and suggests the hope of better days. Even in this life it commonly holds true; 'they that sow in tears shall reap in joy.' Neither when we maintain, that the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, do we mean to deny that the Christian's internal state is, through the whole of his life, a state of discipline and warfare. But if he has solitudes and griefs peculiar to himself, he has joys also with which a stranger intermeddles not.

HUMAN FRAILTY.

J. TAYLOR.

‘We are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.’

We are as water, weak and of no consistence, always descending, abiding in no certain place, unless where we are detained with violence, and every little breath of wind makes us rough and tempestuous, and troubles our faces; every trifling accident discomposes us; and as the face of the waters wafting in a storm so wrinkles itself, that it makes upon its forehead furrows deep and hollow like a grave, so do our great and little cares and trifles first make the wrinkles of old age, and then they dig a grave for us; and there is in nature nothing so contemptible, but it may meet with us in such circumstances, that it may be too hard for us in our weaknesses; and the sting of a bee is a weapon sharp enough to pierce the finger of a child or the lip of a man; and those creatures which nature hath left without weapons, yet they are armed sufficiently to vex those parts of men which are left defenceless and obnoxious to a sunbeam, to the roughness of a sour grape, to the unevenness of a gravel stone, to the dust of a wheel, or the unwholesome breath of a star looking awry upon a sinner.

But besides the weakness and natural decayings of our bodies, if chances and contingencies be innumerable, then no man can reckon our dangers, and the preternatural causes of our deaths; so that he is a vain person whose hopes of life are too confidently increased by reason of his health; and he is too unreasonably timorous, who thinks his hopes at an end when he dwells in sickness. For men die without rule, and with and without occasions; and no man suspecting or foreseeing any of death's addresses, and no man, in his whole condition, is weaker than another. A man in a consumption is fallen under one of the solemnities and preparations to death; but at the same instant the most healthful person is as near death, upon a more fatal and a more sudden, but a less discerned cause. There are but few persons upon whose foreheads every man can read the sentence of death written in the lines of a lingering sickness, but they sometimes hear the passing bell ring for stronger men. No man is surer of tomorrow than the weakest of his brethren; and when Lepidus and Aufidius stumbled at the threshold of the senate, and fell down and died, the blow came from heaven in a cloud; but it struck more suddenly than upon the poor slave that made sport upon the theatre with a premeditated and foredescribed death. There are sicknesses that walk in darkness, and there are ex-

terminating angels that fly wrapt up in the curtains of immateriality and an uncommunicating nature; whom we cannot see, but we feel their force, and sink under their sword, and from heaven the veil descends that wraps our heads in the fatal sentence. There is no age of man, but it hath proper to itself some posterns and the outlets of death, besides those infinite and open parts out of which myriads of men and women every day pass into the dark, and the land of forgetfulness. Infancy hath life but in effigy, or like a spark dwelling in a pile of wood; the candle is so newly lighted, that every little shaking of the taper, and every ruder breath of air puts it out, and it dies.

Vain are the thoughts of man, who, when he is young or healthful, thinks he hath a long thread of life to run over, and that it is violent and strange for young persons to die, and natural and proper only for the aged. It is as natural for a man to die by drowning as by a fever; and what greater violence or more unnatural thing is it, that the horse threw his rider into the river, than that a drunken meeting cast him into a fever? And the strengths of youth are as soon broken by the strong sicknesses of youth, and the stronger intemperance, as the weakness of old age, by a cough, or asthma, or a continual rheum; nay, it is more natural for young men and women to die than for old; because that is more natural that

hath more natural causes, and that is more natural, which is most common ; but to die with age is an extreme rare thing ; and there are more persons carried forth to burial before the five and twentieth year of their age, than after it ; and therefore, let no vain confidence make you hope for a long life ; if you have lived but little, and are still in youth, remember, that you are now in your biggest throng of dangers both of body and soul ; and the proper sins of youth, to which they rush infinitely and without consideration, are also the proper and immediate instruments of death. But if you be old, you have escaped long and wonderfully, and the time of your escaping is out ; you must not for ever think to live upon wonders, or that God will work miracles to satisfy your longing follies and unreasonable desires of living to sin and to the world. Go home and think to die, and what you would choose to be doing when you die, that do you daily ; for you will all come to that pass to rejoice that you did so, or wish that you had ; that will be the condition of every one of us ; for God regardeth no man's person.

DEATH OF THOMAS PAINE.

WHEN an intelligent and thinking man, who has been accustomed to look into himself and to

observe his own imperfections and sins, and whose thoughts have expatiated on eternity, can view the approach of death not only without terror or any misgivings of mind, but with tranquil resignation, and cheering and triumphant hope ; when he can depart from this life with the full assurance of living again, and of living in a better world ; his composure and joy under these circumstances, with a correct view of his own character, and with a full belief of the retribution of eternity, bring the highest honor to the religious system upon which they are founded.

In the controversy between the friends and the enemies of the gospel, the former can point to many expiring mortals, and with unanswerable argument can say, 'See how a Christian can die !' But where are the models of composure and triumph among those who are not Christians ? What are the names of the unbelievers, who at the hour of death have exhibited any enviable elevation of soul ? In the faded eye of what dying infidel has the light of eternity kindled a splendor, which has brightened and brightened, till the curtain of death has been spread over it ?

It appears that Mr Paine, like Mr Gibbon, was unwilling to be left alone, as he drew near to the confines of another world. Although in conversation he professed to be perfectly willing to die, yet if his curtains were at any time closed, he

would literally scream till they were opened, and till he could perceive that some fellow man was nigh him. Was this courageous in a dying man? Did it appal a bold infidel to have living beings withdrawn for a moment from his eye, and to be, as it were, in the sole presence of his God? Did a sense of desertion come over him, when his earthly friends were not by his side? Was he unable to repose himself upon the great Creator, in whom he professed to believe?

Mr Paine was frequently visited in his sickness by his brethren in infidelity, who were actuated by very different motives from those which governed the ministers of God who also visited him. The former came to strengthen him in his rejection of the truth; to encourage him manfully to condemn the glad tidings of salvation; to warn him of the disgrace of betraying the least symptom of compunction; and to fortify the dying man in his cheerless faith, if faith it can be called, by appealing to his egregious vanity and to his swollen pride. Was not this an office worthy of demons in human shape? From a man thus situated ought we to expect any intimation of his belief in Jesus Christ? Should we not suppose, that, for the honor of the craft, his lips would be sealed in stubborn silence, whatever sensations there might be in his heart? Yes, it is an unquestionable truth, and a truth which ought to be carried to the ears of every

man who has been corrupted by the 'Age of Reason,' that Mr Paine, in his paroxysms of distress, repeatedly, and constantly cried out 'O Lord, help me! God, help me! Jesus Christ, help me!'

Is this the daring infidel who blasphemed the Saviour of the world? Does he in the extremity of his suffering call upon him for aid? It is a poor triumph to boast over this wretched man for his reluctant, or rather, involuntary, testimony to a truth which in the days of his health he had ridiculed; for though he had never uttered the above exclamation, yet the time is coming when he and every created intelligent being will 'bow the knee at the name of Jesus, and confess him to be Lord.'

RULES FOR THE PREVENTION OF EVIL SPEAKING.

TILLOTSON.

1. NEVER say any evil of another, but what you certainly know. Whenever you positively accuse a man of a crime, though it be in private and among friends, speak as if you were upon your oath, because God sees and hears you. This, not only charity, but justice, and a regard to truth demand of us. He that easily credits an ill report is almost as faulty as the inventor of it.

Therefore, never speak evil of any upon common fame, which for the most part is false, but almost always uncertain.

2. Before you speak evil of another, consider whether he hath not obliged you by some real kindness, and then it is a bad return to speak ill of him who hath done you good. Consider, also, whether you may not come hereafter to be acquainted with him, related to him, or in want of his favor whom you have thus injured? And whether it may not be in his power to revenge a spiteful and needless word by a shrewd turn? So that if a man made no conscience of hurting others, yet he should in prudence have some consideration for himself.

3. Let us accustom ourselves to be truly sorry for the faults of men, and then we shall take no pleasure in publishing them. Common humanity requires this of us, considering the great infirmities of our nature, and that we also are liable to be tempted; considering, likewise, how severe a punishment every crime is to itself, and how terribly it exposeth a man to the wrath of God. He is not a good Christian that is not sorry for the faults of his greatest enemies; and if he be so, he will discover them no farther than is necessary to some good end.

4. Whenever we hear any man evil spoken of, if we have heard any good of him, let us say that.

It is always more humane, and more honorable, to vindicate others, than to accuse them. Possibly, the good you have heard of them may not be true, but it is much more probable that the evil is not ; however, it is better to preserve the credit of the bad, than to stain the reputation of the innocent. Were it necessary that a man should be evil spoken of, his good and bad qualities should be mentioned together, otherwise he may be strangely misrepresented, and an indifferent man may be made a monster.

They that will observe nothing in a wise man, but his oversights and follies ; nothing in a good, but his failings and infirmities, may render both despicable. Should we heap together all the passionate speeches, all the imprudent actions, of the best man, and present them all at one view, concealing his wisdom and virtues ; he, in this disguise, would look like a madman or a fury. And yet, if his life were fairly represented in the manner it was led, he would appear to all the world to be an admirable and excellent person. But how numerous soever any man's ill qualities are, it is just that he should have the due praise of his few real virtues.

5. That you may not speak ill, do not delight to hear it of any. Give no countenance to busy bodies ; if you cannot decently reprove them because of this quality, divert the discourse some

other way ; or, by seeming not to mind it, signify that you do not like it.

6. Let every man mind his own duty and concern. Do but endeavour in good earnest to mend thyself, and it will be work enough, and leave thee little time to talk of others.

Lastly, let us set a watch before the door of our lips, and not speak but upon consideration ; I do not mean to speak finely, but fitly. Especially when thou speakest of others, consider of whom, and what, thou art going to speak ; use great caution and circumspection in this matter ; look well about thee, on every side of the thing, and on every person in the company, before thy words slip from thee ; which, when they are once out of thy lips, are for ever out of thy power. The sin of evil speaking is plainly condemned by the word of God ; and the duty of refraining from it as easy, as a resolute silence upon just occasion ; as reasonable, as prudence, justice, charity, and the preservation of peace and good will among men can make it ; and of as necessary and indispensable an obligation, as the authority of God can render any thing.

Upon which considerations, let David's deliberate resolution be ours ; 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue.' And I verily believe, that should we but heartily endeavour to amend this one fault, we should soon

be better men in our whole lives; I mean, that the correcting of this vice, together with those that are nearly allied to it, would make us owners of a great many virtues, and carry us on a good way towards perfection; it being hardly to be imagined, that a man who makes conscience of his words should not take an equal or a greater care of his actions. And this I take to be both the true meaning, and the true reason of the saying of St James, with which I shall conclude; 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.'

ADVANTAGES OF AN EARLY PIETY.

TILLOTSON.

1. WE have the greatest and most sensible obligations to remember our Creator in the days of our youth; in that age, when the blessing of life is new, and the memory of it fresh upon our minds; when our health is in its strength and vigor, and the pleasures and enjoyments of life have their full taste and relish. So Job describes the days of his youth; 'Oh! that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness, as I was in the days of my youth, &c.'

'Thou art inexcusable, O man, whoever thou

art,' if thou art unmindful of God in the best age of thy life, and when the sense of his benefits ought, upon all accounts, to make the strongest and deepest impressions upon thy mind.

2. The reason will be yet stronger to put us upon this, if we consider, that, notwithstanding the great obligation which lies upon us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth, we are most apt at that time to forget him.

Youth is extremely addicted to pleasure, because it is most capable and most sensible of it; and where we are most apt to be transported, there are we most apt to transgress. Nor doth any thing so beset the mind, and extinguish in it all sense of divine things, as sensual pleasures. If we fall in love with them, they will take off our thoughts from religion, and steal away our hearts from God. For no man can serve two masters; and the carnal mind is enmity against God.

Besides, youth is rash and inconsiderate, because inexperienced; and consequently not apt to be cautious and prudent, no, not as to the concerns of this temporal life, much less of that which seems to be at so much a greater distance, and for that reason is so very seldom in our thoughts.

3. This age is fittest to begin a religious course of life. And this does not contradict the former

argument; for as it is true of children, that they are most prone to idle, and yet fittest to learn; so in the case before us, both are true, that youth is an age wherein we are too apt, if left to ourselves, to forget God and religion, and yet at the same time, fittest to receive the impressions of it.

Youth is the proper age of discipline; the age of suppleness, obedience, patience of labor; which should be plied by parents, before that vigor and stiffness, which grows with years, come on. It is a very different thing to make impressions upon age, and to deface the evil which hath been deeply imprinted upon young and tender minds. When good instruction has been neglected at first, a conceited ignorance commonly takes possession, and obstructs all the passages through which knowledge and wisdom should enter into us.

It is a mighty advantage to any thing to be planted in a ground newly broken up; and just the same thing is it for young persons to be entered into a religious course, and to have their minds habituated to virtue, before vicious customs have got place and strength in them; for whoever shall attempt this afterwards, will meet with infinite difficulty.

4. This is the most acceptable time, because it is the first of our age. Under the law, the first fruits and the first born were God's. In like manner we should devote the first of our time to him.

He is the first and most excellent of beings, and therefore it is fit that the prime of our age, and the excellency of our strength should be dedicated to his service.

An early piety must be very acceptable to God, because it is a sign that we have a true value for his service, when we can give him our good days, and the years which we ourselves have pleasure in; and that we have a grateful sense of his benefits, when we make the quickest and best return we can, and think nothing too good to render him, from whom we have received all. It is also an argument of great sincerity, which is the soul of all religion and virtue, because we are not drawn to God by those forcible constraints which lie upon men in time of sickness and old age.

As there is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner, it cannot but be there very pleasing to see a young person, besieged by powerful temptations, acquit himself gloriously, and resolutely hold out against their most violent assaults; to behold one in the prime and flower of his age, courted by pleasures and honors, and all the bewitching vanities of this world, reject them all, and cleave stedfastly to God, saying, 'Let them dote upon these things, who are ignorant of the sincere and solid pleasures of religion and virtue; let them run into the arms of temptation, who can forget God, their creator, preserver, and the guide of

their youth. As for me, I will serve the Lord, and will employ my time either innocently or usefully, in serving God and doing good to men. This work shall take up my whole life ; there shall be no void or empty space in it ; I will endeavour, as much as possible, that there may be no breach in it for the devil and his temptations to enter in ; Lord, I will be thine, I have chosen thee for my happiness and my portion for ever. Whom have I in heaven but thee ? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. Lo ! they that are far from thee shall perish, but it is good for me to draw near to God ; to begin and end my days in his fear, and to his glory '

THE PENITENT'S OFFERING.

MRS HEMANS.

And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

And stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and anointed them with the ointment.

And Jesus said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

THOU, that with pallid cheek,
And eyes in sadness meek,
And faded locks that humbly swept the ground,
From thy long wanderings won,
Before the all healing Son,
Didst bow thee to the earth, oh lost and found !

When thou wouldst bathe his feet,
With odors richly sweet,
And many a shower of woman's burning tears,
And dry them with that hair
Brought low, the dust to wear,
From the crowned beauty of its festal years,—

Did he reject thee then,
While the sharp scorn of men
On thy once bright and stately head was cast ?

No, from the Saviour's mien
A solemn light serene
Bore to thy soul the peace of God at last!

For thee, their smiles no more
Familiar faces wore;
Voices, once kind, had learned the stranger's tone:
Who raised thee up, and bound
Thy silent spirit's wound?
He from all guilt the stainless, he alone!

But which, oh erring child,
From home so long beguiled,
Which of thine offerings won those words of heaven,
That, o'er the bruised reed
Condemned of earth to bleed,
In music past, 'Thy sins are all forgiven?'

Was it that perfume, fraught
With balm and incense, brought
From the sweet woods of Araby the Blest?
Or that fast flowing rain
Of tears, which not in vain
To him who scorned not tears, thy woes confessed?

No, not by these restored
Unto the Father's board,
Thy peace, that kindled joy in heaven, was made;
But costlier in his eyes,
By that best sacrifice,
Thy heart, thy deep full heart, before him laid.

INFLUENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

J. ERSKINE.

PUBLIC teachers often refine the taste, improve the genius, civilize the manners, and promote the literary pursuits of a nation. The advantages of this kind derived from their labors, though much inferior to others afterwards to be mentioned, are yet important enough to demand our grateful notice and acknowledgment. It is chiefly in christian countries, that the valuable remains of Eastern, of Greek, and of Roman wisdom and eloquence, have been preserved, studied, imitated, and sometimes even excelled. Christian countries have produced the most complete and accurate books of history, geography, chronology, and antiquities, and the most judicious systems of natural religion, of morals, both as respecting individuals and nations, of jurisprudence, and of political knowledge. Christians have conducted philosophical inquiries with the best success, and improved them for the most useful and benevolent purposes. If these things are good and profitable to society, a large portion of the honor of such usefulness belongs to men set for the defence of the gospel, desirous by sound reasoning to convince gainsayers, and conscious what arms hu-

man literature furnishes for this holy war. Of these defenders of the faith, many were clergymen, and laid the foundation of their knowledge in preparing for their sacred office ; and many who were not clergymen, owed their education and their love of learning to those who were.

From the history of the primitive church, of the dark ages, of the reformation and revival of learning, and of modern times, what I have said might with ease be confirmed. I would however lead your attention to what immediately results from teachers of Christianity acting in that capacity, and publicly instructing others by their sermons or expositions of scripture. To thousands, who have no leisure or opportunity to form their taste, to cultivate their rational powers, by conversation with the wise and enlightened, or by reading their works, a school is thus open, established indeed for higher purposes, where men of sound understandings, though low in rank, may, without expense, and almost without intending it, learn, from example, to distinguish or connect ideas, to infer one truth from another, and so to arrange and express their sentiments, as deeply to impress themselves and others. As, in a few years, the child gradually acquires the faculty of speaking his mother tongue with a considerable degree of ease, fluency, and perfection, without any formal lessons, merely by hearing it spoken ; so there is

a natural logic and rhetoric, which some acquire without designing it, who go to church for nobler ends, by which they are enabled to detect the cunning craftiness whereby enemies of religion, or of public tranquillity, lie in wait to deceive. Indeed the culture of the talents, and the improvement of the intellectual abilities of that respectable class of men, who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, generally rises or falls, in proportion to the character and genius of their religious instructors. In those parts of Britain, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and the American States, where a devout attendance on religious instruction is most general, good sense, sound judgment, and a discerning spirit, are most conspicuous. But where the reverse takes place, and churches are deserted, either from aversion to religion, or from dislike of its ministers, ignorance, rudeness, and contempt of the most necessary and useful knowledge, gradually become the prevailing character of the people.

What lover of mankind would not applaud an institution, by which, for more than seventeen hundred years, the poor have been taught to suffer want, the afflicted in patience to possess their souls, the anxious to be careful for nothing, and the fearful to hope in God? Exquisite pains have thus been softened, the heaviest griefs assuaged, and in nights of darkness, of perplexity,

and of terror, light has shined. Call not then an order pernicious or unprofitable, which has comforted thousands of mourners; call not men the poison or pest of society, from whose exertions so much good has followed. What! Is the nature of things changed? Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Can the apostles of scepticism, of infidelity, of atheism, can they boast that such blessings are the consequence of their labors? Go to the country where tyranny wears the iron mask, where there is no peace to him who cometh in, or to him that goeth out; ask the wretched inhabitants; and when thou returnest, if thou art permitted to return, tell thy friends whether, in the multitude of their sorrowful thoughts within them, the comforts of free thinking and irreligion supported their souls.

Alas! the path to inward peace, when without are fightings, and within are fears, they have not known. But, hast thou not seen, hast thou not heard, hath it not been told thee, with what eagerness and pleasure, sufferers, when lurking in the depths of distress, have listened to him who weeps with them that weep, and have learned, in the school of Christ, to pour what is infinitely better than oil or wine, into their painful wounds? Sympathy gives strength to the feeblest efforts for solacing sorrow. He who sincerely wishes the welfare of the afflicted, promotes it by a thousand

little attentions, the natural effects, without a moment's deliberation, of the disposition of his heart. Every look, every word, which indicates attachment and tenderness, touches the heart. Delicacy and compassion, without any formal design, brighten many an hour of sadness, by things which, in the moment of saying or doing them, they accounted trifles, and the next moment utterly forgot. What then may they not perform, when, divinely directed, they point out to the sons of sadness the Balm of Gilead, the Physician there, the consolations of God, which are neither few nor small? Often they are the instruments of appointing to the mourner beauty for ashes, and for the spirit of heaviness the garments of praise; and even sometimes make him forget his sorrows or remember them as waters that are past. Although affliction cometh not forth from the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward. It is therefore an institution well calculated for diminishing and alleviating distress, that an order of men, qualified to comfort those in trouble, with the comfort whereby they themselves are comforted of God, should have it in charge to open to their brethren in tribulation, those views and prospects, through which they may greatly rejoice, though now, for a season, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold trials.

THE EARLY TRIUMPHS OF CHRISTIANITY.

J. ERSKINE.

THOUGH Jesus, during his personal ministry, spake as never man spake, testifying what he had seen and heard of the Father, yet no man received his testimony. He came to his own and his own received him not. Though, in his own name, and by his own power, he did among them such works as no other man did, yet he was despised and neglected of men. If the nation which eagerly looked for the coming of the Messiah, gave him such treatment, was it probable that Gentiles, strangers to the covenant of promise, and not prepared for his gracious message by any former dispensation, would receive it more favorably? Yet, in fact, it was thus. God had foretold, 'to him, whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise; and princes also shall worship.' He who had so little influence while he tabernacled on earth, now, when men see him no more, becomes the desire and the delight of all nations. In about thirty years after Christ's resurrection, Christianity gains ground in most of the provinces of the Roman empire, and penetrates to Parthia, India, and

other remote corners of the earth. Hundreds, nay, sometimes thousands, were converted by one sermon. The busy, the idle, the profligate, the civilized, the court, the camp, the schools of philosophy, all afforded trophies to the cross. Nor did Christianity thus gain ground in a dark, illiterate, superstitious age. Never was there a period when imposture bid fairer to be detected, and every cunningly devised fable, or specious argument, to be thoroughly sifted. The religion preached among the Gentiles, did not favor their prejudices, flatter their pride, or soothe their depraved appetites and passions. It called them to abhor what from their infancy they had been taught to venerate; to embrace opinions which the men of wisdom pronounced foolishness, to own one as their Saviour and Lord, who hung on a tree, and not to indulge in sins once dearer to them than a right hand or a right eye.

Great was the opposition the gospel had to encounter. The superstition of Heathens, the bigotry of Jews, the wisdom of philosophers, the eloquence of orators, the ridicule of men of wit, the authority of princes, the craft of priests, joined in alliance against the gospel, with every vicious inclination, every emotion of pride in the human heart. To oppose the efforts of this formidable confederacy, men are employed, of no rank and fortune, no power and influence, no policy or learning. The bold

attempt provokes the vengeance of earth and hell on them and their followers. Yet fines, banishment, torture, death, inflicted with every circumstance of cruelty, could not deter multitudes, of the tenderest age and sex, from boldly and openly professing a religion, against which, a little before, they had been deeply prejudiced. Tent makers, publicans and fishermen, by preaching the plain truths of Christianity, without the ornaments of eloquence or enticing words of man's wisdom; by enforcing duties contrary to every corrupt affection, and by patiently suffering persecution for the word of their testimony, are honored, as the instruments of accomplishing a great and most improbable change in the sentiments, tempers, and manners of men. The more they are persecuted, the more they grow. They who led them captive, are themselves captivated by divine truth. Meanness proves an overmatch for greatness, foolishness for wisdom, weakness for strength. Philosophy is baffled and silenced by unpolished simplicity. The sheep overcome the wolves, the lambs the lions, the doves the birds of prey, and the gospel treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God. The gracious influences, and miraculous gifts of the Spirit, were the only adequate causes of those triumphs of the gospel.

RULES FOR READING THE SCRIPTURES.**JAMES FOSTER.**

THE first thing that I would recommend, is, that we come to the search with honest and unprejudiced minds. In order to the finding out truth in the great points that relate to moral practice, an acute understanding is not so necessary as a sincere, upright heart; and even the plainness of the rule itself does not contribute more towards it, than integrity and impartiality in those who are guided by it. Prejudice will pervert and darken the plainest rule. And therefore, if men apply to the study of the scriptures with minds prepossessed in favor of any particular scheme; if they take it for granted, before they have examined, that this is the religion of the bible; all they have to do is, in the best manner they can, to accommodate scripture to it. By their being thus predetermined, all farther light is excluded; passages of scripture are strained, and tortured, and darkened by unnatural comments; because men search the scripture, not to find out the sense of that, but to make it speak their own sense. But, on the contrary, if their minds are free and disengaged, and they have no concern but for truth, the rule of scripture is so plain in all essential points, that they can hardly, with any ordinary degree of judgment, mistake it.

2. In enterpreting scripture, always regard the general scope and design of it. Let those who have leisure, read whole books at once, or, at least, to the end of proper periods, that they may have an entire and connected view of the things contained in them. For it must give us but confused ideas to break off in the midst of a narration, or jumble together parts of different facts ; so likewise to read only select portions out of epistles, and those, perhaps, injudiciously chosen, when there is one design pursued in the whole, and a continued reference throughout. Be careful likewise to attend to the connexion of the writer, and the thread of his reasoning. For, in all writings, independent passages may be urged to serve all manner of purposes ; by which means the gravest and most judicious authors may be forced to talk ludicrously, and inconsistently ; and the best and most useful books, which are written with strict regard to virtue, be made to countenance vice and impiety.

To the directions above mentioned, about observing the general design of scripture, and the connexion of particular passages, which is necessary in interpreting all writings whatever, let me add, that it is proper for us to make some allowances for the difference of languages, and the peculiar phrases and idiom used by the people for whom the scriptures were originally and more immedi-

ately designed. I shall explain this a little by the words 'forever' and 'everlasting,' which are far from having the same force in the sacred writings, as they generally have in our language. For it is certain that they do not always signify a strict and absolute eternity, but very frequently a limited duration; and the sense of them is, in a great measure, to be determined by the subjects to which they are applied. Thus every one allows, that when we read of 'everlasting mountains,' the word means very differently from what it does when God is said to be everlasting. Again, when it is said of Christ, that 'he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end,' we are to understand no more by it, than that he shall reign to the end of the world; for then, we are expressly informed by St Paul, 'he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.' In like manner, when we are told that Sodom and Gomorrah 'are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,' nothing more is meant, than a fire that made a full end of them, and was not extinguished, till those cities, with their inhabitants, were utterly consumed. In these passages, and in some others, which seldom regard things of real importance, we must allow for the change of languages, and different use of words; and the common people will, without much difficul-

ty, fall into the true interpretation of all passages of this kind, if they follow but the natural and easy method of comparing one part of scripture with another.

THE PLEASURES OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE.

JAMES FOSTER.

It is an excellent property of the pleasures of religion and virtue, that they will bear the strictest review, and improve upon reflection. Let a man examine ever so carefully the pleasure he feels on having discharged his duty to God and practised that reverence and submission, that love and gratitude, which are immutably due, from all rational beings, to the Father of the universe, the eternal and inexhaustable fountain of good ; the pleasures of impartial justice, and generous, diffusive benevolence ; or those that spring from temperance and chastity, keeping all his passions under strict government, and denying himself every irregular gratification, however agreeable to his warmest and strongest inclinations ; let him examine those pleasures, I say, ever so carefully, and they will all appear to be worthy his most excellent faculties, the dignity and refine-

ment of his nature. He will find himself so constituted, that it is impossible for him to avoid being delighted with the review of such a regular, honorable, and amiable conduct; and there is nothing but a sense of his defects, and not having cultivated these virtues in a higher degree, that can give the least check to his inward satisfaction. Every new reflection is a repetition of the pleasure.

But the enjoyments of sense, if pursued with the utmost prudence and moderation, will be found to be, at best, but innocent. There is nothing in them that shows the excellency of our constitution above that of the creatures below us; and consequently, it is not in their nature to yield that generous and sublime delight, that arises from exercises of piety and virtue. Nay, there is really something mortifying that attends a just estimate and consideration of them, as they discover to us the weakness and imperfection of our present frame, and the disorders to which it is liable. For by means of that very animal composition, which renders us capable of enjoyments of this kind, we are subject to innumerable inconveniences; not only to ungoverned passions, and the fatal extravagances that they continually produce, but to dejection of spirits, confused and melancholy thoughts, sickness, pain, and all the evils of mortality. And if the indulgences of sense, éven

when they are most regular, yield so little comfort on a review, and are rather a humiliating consideration than a source of real satisfaction to the mind, in what a disagreeable light must the excesses of luxury and vicious pleasure appear, upon cool and impartial reflection! These, the natural consequences of which, where there is not a hardened, insensible temper, are nothing but confusion, shame, and remorse, cannot bear a comparison with the rational pleasures of religion, which, the more they are considered, must be the more thoroughly approved. Religious pleasures are of all others the most pure and unmixed, not interrupted in the enjoyment with disquieting suspicions, nor succeeded by uneasy terrors. And this is one of their most noble and most recommending properties; a property that can never belong to any enjoyments, however, for the moment they last, transporting, however applauded or admired, that reason condemns. And nothing can more fully demonstrate the folly of such irregular indulgences than this, that it is absolutely impossible for any man to be happy, whose favorite gratifications leave a sting behind them, who is ashamed of his conduct and at variance with himself.

The pleasures of religion depend entirely on ourselves, and not on those numberless accidents, which may either prevent, or blast, or entirely

destroy all outward pleasures ; not on the senses, which may lose their quickness ; not on the animal passions, which may grow faint and languid ; not on the return of an overloaded and jaded appetite ; not on mutual agreement and confederacy ; not on critical seasons, and special opportunities ; not on the jealousies, passions, and opposite interests of our fellow creatures. These things have almost the sole influence in forming and disposing of the pleasures of the ambitious and the sensualist ; but those that spring from virtue are free and independent. Being seated in the mind, they may be enjoyed in their greatest refinement when the body decays, and the edge of all its appetites is blunted. The malice and power of the most formidable oppressors, who may take from us all the outward accommodations of life, cannot deprive us of them. They forsake us not, even in solitude. But if we were banished the society of all mankind, a consciousness of our integrity, while we conversed in the world, and a reflection on the simplicity and rectitude of our manners, would furnish out a great and noble entertainment. And as the pleasures of a good life depend entirely on ourselves, it is in our power to be always increasing them by a greater proficiency in virtue ; whereas, those of sense are according to fixed and stated laws of nature, by us unalterable. We may, indeed, animate and raise our imagina-

tions, and promise ourselves, beforehand, extraordinary scenes of delight, but, with all our art, can do but little, if any thing at all, to heighten the actual enjoyment.

Religious pleasures are our best, our only support, under the disappointments and calamities of life. There are lesser cares, which a person may possibly divert, at least in some degree, by a course of intemperance and luxury ; by constantly inflaming his passions, and doing his utmost to keep reason asleep. But this is not so much the firmness of a man, as the stupidity of a brute. And after all, as insensible as the sinner may appear to be, in the midst of his affected gaiety, his mind may be confused, and an utter stranger to settled cheerfulness and peace. There are some circumstances in which all outward comforts must fail him, and leave him quite destitute of relief. Let us suppose, for instance, that he labors under decays of nature, or is tormented with acute pains, or under the immediate apprehension of death ; in such a condition as this, when he is altogether incapable of any of those sensual gratifications, which he has always pursued as the sum of his felicity, will the remembrance of past pleasures refresh and bear up his spirits ? Quite the contrary. They must appear, at best, to be insignificant and trifling ; and it is natural to expect that a review of the guilty scene will alarm and

fill him with horror, and render his other miseries more heavy and insupportable.

But the good man, who has acted as became him, and steadily adhered to the rules of virtue and religion, has in all such critical seasons of distress a solid and substantial support. His pleasures will not desert him in the very last extremity of nature ; but a sense of his Maker's favor, and the prospect of a happy immortality, must needs alleviate the weight of every affliction he suffers, and enable him to bear up under the wastings of a shattered constitution, with resolution and constancy. And surely nothing can be more desirable than to have relief from within, when all is dark and gloomy without us.

THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

COWPER.

' Oh most delightful hour by man
 Experienced here below,
 The hour that terminates his span,
 His folly, and his woe !

Worlds should not bribe me back to tread
 Again life's dreary waste,
 To see again my day o'erspread
 With all the gloomy past.

My home, henceforth, is in the skies ;
 Earth, seas, and sun, adieu !
 All heaven unfolded to my eyes,
 I have no sight for you.'

So spake Aspasio, firm possessed
 Of faith's supporting rod ;
 Then breathed his soul into its rest,
 The bosom of his God.

He was a man among the few
 Sincere on virtue's side ;
 And all his strength from scripture drew,
 To hourly use applied.

That rule he prized, by that he feared,
 He hated, hoped, and loved ;
 Nor ever frowned, or sad appeared,
 But when his heart had roved.

**For he was frail as thou or I,
And evil felt within ;
But when he felt it, heaved a sigh,
And loathed the thought of sin.**

**Such lived Aspasio ; and at last,
Called up from earth to heaven,
The gulf of death triumphant passed,
By gales of blessing driven.**

**‘ His joys be mine,’ each reader cries,
‘ When my last hour arrives.’
‘ They shall be yours,’ my verse replies,
‘ Such only be your lives.’**

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

DR JOHNSON.

'LIFE,' says Seneca, 'is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes; we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age.' The perusal of this passage having excited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations, and on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labor, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamor and confusion, I was told that we were launching out into the ocean of life, that we had already passed the straits of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence of those who undertook to steer them; and that we were

now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness, and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure, but no sooner touched, than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands, all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools; for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable; but though it was impossible to sail against

it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might avoid it by oblique direction.

It was however not very common to steer with much care or prudence; for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking around him; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and their misconduct were forgotten; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed; nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course; if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference or from weariness of their present condition; for not one of those, who thus rushed upon destruction, failed, when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the

midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

In the midst of the current of life was the gulph of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape; but few could, by her intreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far, by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it by insensible rotations towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the

gulph was generally too strong to be overcome; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown Power: 'Gaze not idly upon others, when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?' I looked, and seeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

SINCERITY IN FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.

ADVENTURER.

AMONGST all the beauties and excellences of the ancient writers, of which I confess myself an admirer, there are none which strike me with more veneration than the precepts they have delivered to us for our conduct in society. The fables of the poets, and the narrations of the historians, amuse and delight us with their respective qualifications; but we feel ourselves particularly concerned, when a moral virtue, or a special obligation is set before us, the practice of which is our indispensable duty; and, perhaps, we are more ready to observe these instructions, or, at

least, acquiesce sooner in the propriety of them, as the authority of the teacher is unquestionable, the address not particularly confined or levelled, and the censure less dogmatical.

Of all the virtues which the ancients possessed, the zeal and fidelity of their friendships appear to me as the highest distinctions of their characters. Private persons, and particular affinities amongst them, have been long celebrated and admired; and if we examine their conduct as companions, we shall find, that the rites of their religion were not more sacred, more strongly ratified, or more severely preserved, than their laws of society.

The table of friendship and the altar sacrifices, were equally uncontaminated; the mysteries of Bacchus were enveloped with as many leaves as those of Ceres; and the profanation of either deity excluded the offenders from the assemblies of men; the revealer was judged accursed, and impiety was thought to accompany his steps.

Without inveighing against the practice of the present times, or comparing it with that of the past, I shall only remark, that if we cannot meet together upon the honest principles of social beings, there is reason to fear, that we are placed in the most unfortunate and lamentable era since the creation of mankind. It is not the increase of vices inseparable from humanity that alarms us,

the riots of the licentious, or the outrages of the profligate ; but it is in the absence of that integrity, the neglect of that virtue, the contempt of that honor, which, by connecting individuals, formed society and without which society can no longer subsist.

Few men are calculated for that close connexion, which we distinguish by the appellation of friendship, and we well know the difference between a friend and an acquaintance. The acquaintance is in a post of progression, and after having passed through a course of proper experience, and given sufficient evidence of his merit, takes a new title, and ranks himself higher. He must now be considered as in a place of consequence, in which all the ornaments of our nature are necessary to support him. But the great requisites, those without which all others are useless, are fidelity and taciturnity. He must not only be superior to loquacious imbecility, he must be well able to repress the attacks of curiosity, and to resist those powerful engines that will be employed against him, wine and resentment. Such are the powers that he must constantly exert, after a trust is reposed in him ; and, that he may not overload himself, let him not add to his charge by his own inquiries ; let it be a devolved, not an acquired, commission.

There is a very general inclination amongst us to hear a secret, to whomsoever it relates, known

or unknown to us, of whatever import, serious or trifling, so it be but a secret; the delight of telling it, and of hearing it, are nearly proportionate and equal. The possessor of the valuable treasure appears, indeed, rather to have the advantage, and he seems to claim his superiority. I have discovered at once, in a large company, by an air and deportment that is assumed upon such occasions, who it is that is conscious of this happy charge. He appears restless and full of doubt for a considerable time; has frequent consultations with himself, like a bee undetermined where to settle in a variety of sweets, till at last, one happy ear attracts him more forcibly than the rest, and there he fixes, 'stealing and giving odors.'

In a little time it becomes a matter of great amazement, that the whole town is as well acquainted with the story, as the two who were so busily engaged; and the consternation is greater, as each reporter is confident that he only communicated it to one person. 'A report,' says Strada, 'thus transmitted from one to one, is like a drop of water at the top of a house; it descends but from tile to tile, yet at last makes its way to the gutter, and then is involved in the general stream.' And if I may add to the comparison, the drop of water, after its progress through all the channels of the streets, is not more contaminated with filth and dirt, than a simple story, after it has passed through the mouths of a few modern talebearers.

**YOUTH A SEASON
FOR THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE.**

ALISON.

IN every period of life the acquisition of knowledge is one of the most pleasing employments of the human mind. But in youth there are circumstances, which make it productive of higher enjoyment. It is then that every thing has the charm of novelty, and that the heart swells with the anticipations of future eminence and utility. Even in those lower branches of instruction, which we call mere accomplishments, there is something always pleasing to the young in their acquisition. They seem to become every well educated person; they adorn, if they do not dignify, humanity; and, what is far more, while they give an elegant employment to the hours of leisure and relaxation, they afford a means of contributing to the purity and innocence of domestic life. But in the acquisition of knowledge of a higher kind, in the hours when the young gradually begin the study of the laws of nature, and of the faculties of the human mind, or of the magnificent revelations of the gospel; there is a pleasure of a sublimer nature. The cloud, which, in their infant years, seemed to cover nature from their view begins

gradually to resolve. The world in which they are placed, opens with all its wonders upon their eye; their powers of attention and observation seem to expand with the scene before them; and, while they see, for the first time, the immensity of the universe of God, and mark the majestic simplicity of those laws by which its operations are conducted, they feel as if they were awakened to a higher species of being, and admitted into nearer intercourse with the Author of Nature. It is this period of all others, accordingly, that most determines our hopes or fears of the future fate of the young. To feel no joy in such pursuits; to listen carelessly to the voice which brings such magnificent instruction; to see the veil raised that conceals the counsels of the Deity, and to show no emotion at the discovery, are symptoms of a weak and torpid spirit, of a mind unworthy of the advantages it possesses, and which is fitted only for the humility of sensual, ignoble pleasure. Of those, on the contrary, who distinguish themselves by the love of knowledge, who follow with ardor the career that is opened to them, we are apt to form the most honorable presages. It is the character natural to youth, and which, therefore, promises well of their maturity. We foresee for them at least a life of pure and virtuous enjoyment, and we are willing to anticipate no common share of future usefulness and splendor.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL
ARGUED FROM THE DESIRE OF HAPPINESS.

CHATEAUBRIAND.

IF there were no other proofs of the existence of a God than the wonders of nature, these evidences are so strong as to be quite sufficient to convince every man, whose only object is truth. But if those who deny a Providence, cannot explain the miracles of the creation without one, they are still more puzzled for a reply to the objections of their own hearts. By renouncing the Supreme Being, they are obliged to renounce a future state. The soul nevertheless disturbs them ; she appears every moment before them, and compels them, in spite of their sophistry, to acknowledge her existence and her immortality.

Let them inform us, in the first place, if the soul be extinguished when the body descends to the tomb, whence proceeds the desire of happiness by which they are agitated ? All our passions here below may easily be gratified ; love, ambition, anger, have a determined plenitude of enjoyment ; the desire of happiness is the only one that fails to obtain satisfaction, for we know not what is that vague felicity that we wish for. It must be admitted that if every thing be matter, nature has here

made a strange mistake, in creating a desire without any object.

Certain it is, that the soul is eternally craving ; no sooner has she obtained the object for which she longed, than a new wish is formed, and the whole universe cannot satisfy her. Infinity is the only field adapted to her nature ; she delights to lose herself in numbers, to conceive the greatest as well as the smallest dimensions, and to multiply without end. Filled at length, but not satisfied with all she has devoured, she seeks the bosom of the Deity, in whom centre all ideas of infinity, whether relating to perfection, time, or space.

The inferior animals are not agitated by this hope which manifests itself in the heart of man ; they immediately attain their degree of happiness ; a handful of grass satisfies the lamb, a little blood gluts the tiger. If we were to assert, with some philosophers, that the different conformation of the organs constitutes all the difference between us and the brute, still this mode of reasoning could, at the farthest, be admitted only in acts purely material ; but of what service is my hand to my mind, when amid the silence of night I soar through the regions of boundless space, to discover the architect of so many worlds ? Why does not the ox act, in this respect, as I do ? His eyes are sufficient, and if he had my legs or my arms, they would for this purpose be totally useless to him.

He may repose upon the turf, he may raise his head toward the sky, and call by his bellowing, the unknown Being who fills the immense expanse. But no; he prefers the grass on which he treads; and while those millions of suns that adorn the firmament furnish the strongest evidences of a Deity, the animal soundly slumbers, unconscious that, with the wenders of his instinct, he is himself thrown beneath the tree at the foot of which he lies, as a slight proof of a divine intelligence.

If it be impossible to deny that man cherishes hopes to the very tomb; if it be certain that all earthly possessions, so far from crowning our wishes, only serve to increase the void in the soul; we cannot but conclude, that there must be a something beyond the limits of time.

‘The ties of this world,’ says St Augustin, ‘are attended with real hardship and false pleasure; certain pains and uncertain joys; hard labor and unquiet rest; a situation fraught with woe, and a hope void of felicity.’ Instead of complaining that the desire of happiness has been placed in this world and its object in the other, let us admire in this constitution of things the beneficence of God. Since we must sooner or later quit this mortal life, Providence has placed beyond the fatal boundary, a charm which attracts us, in order to diminish our horror of the grave; thus the affectionate

mother who wishes her child to cross a certain limit, holds a pleasing object on the other side to entice him to pass it.

REFLECTIONS
ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND.

DR JOHNSON.

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philosophers, and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the absorption of our thoughts in the business of the present day, such is the resignation of our reason to empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to see what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burden, but crushes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flash of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way; the concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other misfortunes time brings, though silently, yet visibly forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unre-

sisted, because we could not arm ourselves against them but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which must sometime be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over life, whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines any thing rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says Tully, who does not believe he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend; but the fallacy will be in time detected; the last year, the last day, must come. It has come, and is past. The life that made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is a state of dreary desolation, in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to

the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are calamities by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate ; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exercise resolution, or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honors. Such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose its associations, and every inhabitant of the earth must walk downward to the grave, alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortunes or success.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel ; for where is the bottom of the misery of man ? But what is success to him that has none to enjoy it ? Happiness is not found in selfcontemplation ; it is perceived only where it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no farther intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. 'There is joy in

the angels of Heaven, over one sinner that repenteth ;' and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope therefore dictate, what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain ; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion. When we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power ? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts, when we consider that the greatest Power is the best ?

Surely, there is no man, who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the gospel, which has 'brought life and immortality to light.' The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence, but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be re-

ceived only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and a better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul be filled with joy.

THE INVOCATION.

MRS HEMANS.

ANSWER me, burning stars of night !
 Where is the spirit gone,
 That past the reach of human sight,
 Even as a breeze, hath flown ?
 And the stars answered me, ' We roll
 In light and power on high,
 But of the never dying soul,
 Ask things that cannot die ! '

Oh ! many toned, and chainless wind !
 Thou art a wanderer free ;
 Tell me, if thou its place can find,
 Far over mount and sea ?
 And the wind murmured in reply,
 ' The blue deep I have crossed,
 And met its barks and billows high,
 But not what thou hast lost ! '

Ye clouds that gorgeously repose
 Around the setting sun,
 Answer ! have ye a home for those,
 Whose earthly race is run ?
 The bright clouds answered, ' We depart,
 We vanish from the sky ;
 Ask what is deathless in thy heart,
 For that which cannot die ! '

**Speak, then, thou voice of God within !
Thou of the deep low tone !
Answer me through life's restless din,
Where is the spirit flown ?
And the voice answered, ' Be thou still !
Enough to know is given ;
Clouds, winds, and stars their task fulfil,
Thine is to trust in Heaven ! '**

COURTESY.

J. FAWCETT.

THERE is one method, of a very general nature and diffused over the whole of life, of contributing to human happiness, in which both they that can, and they that cannot increase it by pecuniary communications, may alike concur, which is, the habitual exercise of an honest desire to give pleasure in the general tenor of our conversation and deportment, of a sincere and unaffected courtesy in all our words and actions. There are innumerable nameless attentions and miniature offices of kindness, which have been found so necessary to smooth the intercourses of mankind with one another, that the members of civilized society have, in all nations and ages, agreed among themselves to rank those manners that are composed of such expressions of good will, among the decencies and elegances of life ; to assume, in each other's society, at least a semblance of that kindness, which they have felt to be so essential to the pleasure and comfort of social life ; to conceal the asperities of their temper under the silken mantle of ceremony ; to throw a veil over whatever mutual envy, jealousy, or dislike they might feel ; and to dress out their minds, as well as their bodies, whenever they meet together.

This artificial civility, however, when it is merely such, has several imperfections. Much of its attention is frivolous and officious ; it is accompanied, in spite of every art to conceal it, with the coldness of insincerity ; and it is confined to a limited number of objects. Amidst the domestic and familiar circle, the restraint of art is thrown aside, and relations and friends are laid open to the irruptions of uncorrected acrimony of temper.

But when love is without dissimulation ; when complaisance appears to spring from a sincere desire to please ; when the kind affections are the fountains from which it flows ; however destitute of artificial grace, however defective in delicacy of language and in elegance of carriage, it is infinitely more pleasing than that which is studied and assumed.

He, therefore, whose heart is penetrated, and whose manners are pervaded by a sincere principle of love to man ; who, with a comparative indifference for superfluous forms, extends his endeavours to promote the real comfort of his companions, to points beyond the prescriptions of ceremony ; and who carries these attentions to his private connexions and most familiar hours ; is to be regarded as no inconsiderable contributor to the sum of human happiness, however humble his fortunes may be, however limited his ability to lighten the burdens of poverty.

The mere expression of kindness, where it confers no important benefits, is infinitely soothing to all human creatures. The affability of the rich is often more gratifying to poverty than their bounty; and patronage, without gentleness, renders death more eligible than dependence. There are those who will render occasional services of a substantial nature, but who allow themselves to give pain to all around them, by the unrestrained irruption of ill humor, and the uncontrolled use of unkind language. While their actions sometimes bind up the body's wounds, their words inflict others in the heart, and deep and sore ones too, in the breast of affectionate kinsmen and friends, and frequently in the breast of them, whose outward bruises from fortune's blows, their beneficent hand is healing. Benefactors they are, ungenerous benefactors! who, while from whatever motive they adopt the helpless and the fatherless, are able, by the harshness of their habitual manner towards them, to put the dependent perpetually in mind of his dependence; who occasion a cruel contest in the ingenuous breast, between resentment and gratitude, and put bitter bread into the mouth they profess to feed. Beneficence, in itself, however shining, thus overshadowed, forfeits the character of benevolence, fails to effect happiness, and cancels the obligations of gratitude.

Let not him, who would not wish to discredit his understanding, or expose the sincerity of his virtue to suspicion, call the recommendation of courtesy beneath what is styled the dignity of the pulpit. This virtue is of the first importance, whether considered as an attribute of a character, or as an offering to society. It is a necessary, and an absolutely necessary proof of sincere charity. Where that heavenly principle is planted, it will infallibly produce the fruit. It is the natural emanation of an amiable heart. It may be called the effluvia of philanthropy; it flies off as naturally from it as fragrance from the flower, or as light from the sun. In what I have said under this head, I have but, in other words, recommended the cultivation of radical and vital benevolence. Where that is sincere, this efflux of it will be found in the mannefs. I deliver an important precept, I preach the gospel of Jesus, I repeat the very language of the gospel, when I say, 'Be courteous.'

Nor will this virtue appear in a less important point of view, if considered as a tribute to human happiness. If its effects are little in themselves, there is so continual a repetition of them, there is so perpetual a recurrence of the occasions which call for them, that it will be confessed, by those who attentively consider it, to produce, upon the whole, more happiness in human life, than much of that beneficence which makes a great figure in

it. Although those miniature kindnesses, humble services, and obliging attentions, in a course of which courtesy consists, when separately considered, are insignificant; yet their uniform succession and collective influences, will be found to amount to a larger sum of contribution to happiness, in the narrow sphere which they affect, than any single, occasional act of pecuniary munificence. An accumulation of particles and grains composes the mountain that lifts its head to heaven. A confluence of drops makes up the multitudinous ocean. That humble current of little kindnesses, which, though but a creeping streamlet, yet incessantly flows; although it glides in silent secrecy within the domestic walls, and along the walks of private life, and makes neither appearance nor noise in the world, pours, in the end, a more copious tribute into the store of human comfort and felicity, than any sudden and transient flood of detached bounty, however ample, that may rush into it with a mighty sound.

SPIRITUAL PRIDE.

J. FAWCETT.

ONE cause of moral pride is ignorance of ourselves, or of the degree in which we are virtuous. When we know what we ought to be, it is not so easy to ascertain exactly what we are. Character is best expressed by action; but occasions are necessary to call the character into action; and occasions, adapted to draw it out into those strong and decisive actions, which make it impossible, either for the spectator, or the possessor of it, to entertain a doubt of what it is, do not always occur. There are some who stand in such circumstances, during the whole course of their lives, as to secure them from all temptation to actions flagrantly criminal. In such a situation as this, a strict selfexamination is necessary to arrive at selfknowledge. A decidedly good man, who is thus circumstanced, may know, and indeed must know, that he is, on the whole, a good man; though he cannot so accurately ascertain the extent and degree of his goodness. But, on the other hand, a bad man, whose actions are thus circumscribed, though equally able, by looking into his secret thoughts and feelings, to determine what he is, is generally led to presume, that, as no deep stains appear upon the surface, all is pure and white within.

The characters of many of them who are strangers to piety and virtue, are manifested to themselves, and to the world. Opportunities present themselves, to exhibit what is within them. They are tempted to do wrong, and they do it. They are condemned by the world, and they condemn themselves. They know themselves to be vicious, and make no pretensions to the praise of virtue.

But there are others, who, though in reality little better, if at all, than these, neither appear so to others, or to themselves. Their situations are such as shut up their true character in total shade, and prevent it from coming into the light. Though destitute, therefore, of the spirit which animates the friends of virtue, they consider themselves as standing in that class. Their manners are decent; their reputation is fair; their neighbours respect them, and they can find no fault in themselves.

It is among persons of this description that moral pride abounds. Free from all outward immorality, and never looking within them to attend to what passes there, they conceive themselves to be faultless. It is from such as these that the notoriously wicked receive the loftiest looks, and the loudest reproaches. Attend to the censures, which every day so freely circulate through every part of society; observe if the majority, and if the severest of them do not fall from their lips, whose situations secure them from the faults they con-

damn. Who are they, that with most asperity censure the fraudulent and dishonest? The rich and independent. Who are the persons, that are most severe upon avarice, and the omissions of munificence? The poor and destitute. By whom is the vanity and the pride of the great the most freely censured? By those whom obscurity preserves from the infection of flattery. Take notice who are among the first to lift up their hands and their eyes to Heaven, and to wonder that the pecuniary profusion of the age is not punished with pestilence, or famine, or earthquake. Observe if they be not the sordidly parsimonious, and the naturally dispassionate, who, in consequence of this complexion, are under no temptation to luxury and prodigality. We all of us think of the self-destroyer with horror. He has done a deed which shocks all the feelings of nature, which shakes us all to the very centre of our soul! It is foul! It is impious! But who are they that fling at his memory the heaviest curse, that regard his grave with the most angry eye, with a detestation that would prevent, if it were possible, a flower from flourishing near it, or a sun from shining upon it; with an abhorrence that says, 'Let there be no dew, neither let there rain descend upon it?' Mark if they be not the gay, the prosperous, and the happy; whose imagination no animal melancholy has ever possessed; whose hearts no agonies have

ever wrung; whose reason no disappointments have shaken. How eloquently they talk of the impiety and cowardice of deserting the post in which Providence places us! All that they say, is true; they cannot paint the crime they condemn, in darker colors than it deserves; but he whom they thus upbraid, he also could have talked as they do; and once perhaps he did. To declaim, is an easy thing; to declaim eloquently, is an easy thing; but to act well, is a more arduous task. And many a one, I doubt not, has censured another's fatal despair; has approached the unconsecrated ground, where staked through he lay, with horror, and called the place accursed as he passed it, who was not himself possessed of any more piety to God, or regard to society, to arrest the hand of selfdestruction, had similar distresses tempted him to lift it up. Many have harangued upon the pusillanimity of sinking under distress, without possessing any more fortitude than those that have fainted in the day of adversity. Any man may stand upon the shore, and deride the shrieks of the terrified wretches whom the tempest is tossing.

It is one thing to condemn what is done wrong, and another to do better. We can all of us be very virtuous in our closets; we can all of us be very heroic in the safe and easy fields of speculation, and rise into the heights of moral sublimity, as we recline in the chair of moral criticism.

We can all explain, with the nicest propriety, how the situations we do not fill, ought to be filled; how the burdens we do not bear, ought to be borne. We can be very patient under the pressure of another's sorrows; we can be very brave in the face of another's dangers; we can be very generous in the disposal of another's property. We can sit by the side of a brokenhearted sufferer, and tell him that it is unbecoming a Christian to 'sorrow as those who are without hope,' with a firm and intrepid tone; we can go to the opulent, and point out to them, very clearly, the many benevolent plans which it is in their power, and which it is their duty, therefore, to prosecute; but actually to perform, what we can thus accurately explain and sagely advise, requires more exertion than that of the breath.

I would not be understood to intimate, that all of those who are not tempted to do wrong, would do it if they were. I am the last to say so. No doubt there are many, who, though their virtue has been but little tried, and though trials strengthen virtue more than any thing else, have yet vigor of mind enough to acquit themselves honorably, in the day of temptation. Neither would I wish any truly honest and good man to mistrust his character, because Providence puts his virtue to no outward proof. He has a sufficient evidence of it within him, to preserve him from all painful dif-

fidence, and religious melancholy. He who is conscious to himself of an inward ardor in the cause of truth and virtue; who has taken pains in the cultivation of his character; who has to look back upon a course of serious and close meditation upon religious and moral subjects; and who, in consequence of this cultivation, feels within him a lively love to God and man; and who does all the good he can, and is desirous of doing more; such a man may look up with confidence towards God; such a man has a right to say, 'I am incapable, in any situation, of a deliberately base and dishonorable action.' The amount of what I have said is merely this; that there are many persons of very decent manners, and of unspotted reputation in the world, who are less chargeable with the crimes which others have committed, only because they have not had equal temptation to the commission of them, and that this selfignorance, arising out of this situation, is a frequent and fruitful source of moral pride.

THE STRANGER AND HIS FRIEND.

MATT. XXV. 35—40.

MONTGOMERY.

A POOR wayfaring man of grief
 Hath often crossed me on my way,
 Who sued so humbly for relief,
 That I could never answer, nay.
 I had not power to ask his name,
 Whither he went, or whence he came ;
 Yet there was something in his eye,
 That won my love, I knew not why.

Once, when my scanty meal was spread,
 He entered—not a word he spake—
 Just perishing for want of bread.
 I gave him all ; he blessed it, brake,
 And ate, but gave me part again.
 Mine was an angel's portion then,
 For while I fed with eager haste,
 The crust was manna to my taste.

I spied him where a fountain burst
 Clear from the rock ; his strength was gone ;
 The heedless water mocked his thirst ;
 He heard it, saw it hurrying on—
 I ran, and raised the sufferer up ;
 Thrice from the stream he drained my cup,
 Dipt, and returned it running o'er ;
 I drank, and never thirsted more.

'T was night. The floods were out, it blew
 A winter hurricane aloof;
 I heard his voice abroad, and flew
 To bid him welcome to my roof;
 I warmed, I clothed, I cheered my guest,
 I laid him on my couch to rest;
 Then made the ground my bed, and seemed
 In Eden's garden while I dreamed.

Stript, wounded, beaten nigh to death,
 I found him by the highway side;
 I roused his pulse, brought back his breath,
 Revived his spirit, and supplied
 Wine, oil, refreshment;—he was healed.
 I had myself a wound concealed,
 But from that hour forgot the smart,
 And peace bound up my broken heart.

In prison I saw him next, condemned
 To meet a traitor's doom at morn;
 The tide of lying tongues I stemmed,
 And honored him midst shame and scorn.
 My friendship's utmost zeal to try,
 He asked if I for him would die;
 The flesh was weak, my blood ran chill,
 But the free spirit cried, 'I will.'

Then in a moment to my view,
 The stranger started from disguise;
 The tokens in his hands I knew;
 My Saviour stood before my eyes.

**He spake, and my poor name he named—
‘Of me thou hast not been ashamed ;
These deeds shall thy memorial be ;
Fear not, thou didst them unto me.’**

**COMPLAISANCE
IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.**

SHERLOCK.

THOSE who are of too stiff a virtue to court the world into a compliance with that which is good, may do well to consider how the apostle is to be justified in the character he has given us of himself; 'Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.' Into what a variety of shapes did he turn himself, to gain the affections of men, that he might the more easily gain admission for the gospel of Christ. Had he fallen directly upon their infirmities and mistakes, he might have fired their minds, and stopped their ears to his instructions. He knew that patience and gentle teaching would by degrees get the mastery of their errors, and lead them, without tumult or opposition, to the acknowledgment of the truth; that their prejudices would wear out, and, as the light of the gospel began to dawn in their hearts, their affections would take a new turn of themselves, which at present were not to be stemmed. He used the art of a skilful pilot, who chooses to coast it along the shore when the tide runs too high in the channel, as knowing it

to be not only the safest, but the shortest way to the point he makes.

Yet thus to court the affections of men is by many thought below the dignity of religion. But where does the indignity lie? Ought not men to be made in love with virtue and religion? Yes, you will say. And how is that to be done? Must it not be by engaging their affections in the cause of religion? Undoubtedly it must. And is it then necessary to engage men's affections in the cause of religion, and is it yet an unworthy attempt to endeavour to engage them? How can these things be made to agree? But, if it must be allowed that it is necessary to apply to men's affections in the cause of virtue and religion, it will show the reasonableness of the apostle's advice, and the necessity there is of having recourse to christian prudence and wisdom to direct us in the practice even of that which is good. For all things have not the same appearance to all men; nay, the same object appears differently to the same man, as it is exposed in different lights; which holds as true with respect to the eyes of the mind as of the body; and therefore it lies upon us to guard against any ill impressions that may be made upon others by the good we do.

This care not to offend, is the foundation of civility and good breeding in common life, and will likewise be productive of mutual love and

condescension in religion. It will teach us to be tender of each other's infirmities, and to avoid the occasions of giving offence, which men who have not this care upon their minds rather labor to seek and to improve. Let us but view the difference there will be in one christian grace, when attended with this care, and when not. Let the grace be zeal, which is in itself, without doubt, an excellent gift; but, where men have no regard how far they trust or offend others, how rash and intemperate does it grow in reproaching, not only the vices, but the follies and weaknesses of mankind; how easily does it degenerate into censoriousness, and transport men beyond all bounds of charity and discretion. The consequence is, that it is immediately surrounded with enemies of its own raising, and suffers under the names of fury and uncharitableness. But, on the other side, where it is found in company with prudence, and joined with a care not to offend, it is a gentle and heavenly flame, which warms without scorching. It falls upon its right object, the honor of God and the good of men, and confines itself to such methods only, as may best serve to promote both. It will therefore never run into any indecencies of passion, which are unbecoming the cause it maintains; nor will it provoke and exasperate those whom it labors to reform, as knowing what little benefit men can receive by being ill treated.

Thus will it secure itself from being evil spoken of, and appear with advantage in the eyes of all who behold it.

Men sometimes expose their good to be evil spoken of, out of pure pride and haughtiness of temper. This is the case when men have such a contempt for the world, as not to think it worth their while to guard against the misapprehensions of those about them. They reckon it below their dignity to render any account of what they do, and a mark of guilt to descend so low as to justify their actions. But surely, if we estimate the thing fairly, it is betraying of that which is good to reproach, and laying of stumblingblocks in the way of the blind. The very reason why you despise the world, and disdain to give an account to it of what you do, because the world is weak and captious and below a wise man's notice, is the reason why you ought to endeavour to satisfy it. This rule of the apostle's has its rise from the weakness of men; and the very end of it is to direct us how to walk with respect to those who are weak and unable to judge of things so perfectly as we do. You will see by the verse that follows, that the apostle lays his foundation in the known or supposed weakness of men; 'We, then,' says he, 'that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.' And when he advises us not to let our good be

evil spoken of, what else is it but to advise us to guard against the weakness and misapprehensions of men? He knew surely that good could not be liable to be evil spoken of, but by being misunderstood; and therefore he can mean nothing else, in this charge, but that we should condescend to the weakness of others, and keep our good out of the way of being misunderstood by them.

ANTIQUITY AND EXCELLENCE OF SACRED MUSIC.

G. HORNE.

IN the constitution of man, as the Allwise Artist has been pleased to frame it, there are certain tones of the voice, by which the affections of the mind naturally express themselves. The tone of sorrow is mournful and plaintive; the notes of joy exulting and jubilant. St James, therefore, spake with the strictest propriety, when he said, 'Is any afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing.' When the spirits are raised by good news, or any other very pleasing consideration, every one whose actions are unobserved, and therefore unrestrained, will break forth into singing. It is the proper expression of pleasure; it is 'the voice of joy and health in the dwellings of

the righteous.' Who shall contest their right so to declare and make their feelings known? They have been in possession of the privilege, ever since the hour, when, at the creation of the world, 'the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;' and they will be found to be in possession of it, in the day, when, for the redemption of the world, saints and angels shall sing together, 'Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, to him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.' During the intermediate period between these two great events, there is upon earth a mixture of evil and good; there is, on that account, a mixture of sorrow and joy; and the service of the church consists of prayer and praise. We have sinned, we are afflicted; we pray, our sins are forgiven; we rejoice and sing.

If we consult the page of history, we find that among all nations, where music has been at all understood and practised, it has been applied to this use, and employed in their religious festivals. Whatever was the object of adoration, in this manner was adoration paid. And, as it is notorious, that most of the rites to be found among idolaters, were originally derived from the primeval church of God, and transferred to their false divinities, it is a fair supposition, that what was practised by one, had been first practised by the other. Short as the account of things and per-

sons is in the Mosaic history of an infant world, we read very early of those who 'handled the harp and organ.' It is impossible to say, at this time, what specific instruments are denoted by the Hebrew words; that they denote musical instruments of some sort, there is no doubt.

No sooner was there a regular church established in Israel, a people selected by the Almighty for that very purpose, than we find music making a part of the ritual. The trumpet was blown in the new moon, on the solemn feast day; such was the statute for Israel, the law of the God of Jacob. The performers, vocal and instrumental, were ranged by the royal prophet, under divine direction, in their several classes, and appointed to wait in succession, through the year. At the dedication of the temple by king Solomon, they were all assembled, and performed together, the whole nation joining in a grand chorus of praise and thanksgiving, while the glory of the Lord, a body of light above the brightness of the sun, descended from heaven, and filled the house of God.

If music in the Jewish church served to enliven devotion, and elevate the affections, why should it not be used to produce the like effect among Christians? Human nature is the same, and the power of music is the same; why should there not be the same application of one to the other,

for the same beneficial end, under both dispensations? Vocal music ceased not with the law; why should we suppose that instrumental music was abrogated with it? Surely the trumpet may still be blown upon our feast day; the singers and players on instruments may still make their voices to be heard as one, in blessing and thanking the Lord God of Israel, the redeemer of his people.

The power of music is but too well known by fatal experience, when it is misapplied, applied to cherish and call forth the evil that lies concealed in the corrupt heart of fallen man; to recommend and excite in him all the follies of levity and dissipation, of intemperance and wantonness. What are we to do in this case? Are we to renounce and disclaim music? No; let us employ music against music. If the Philistines sing a chorus in honor of their idol, let Israelites sing one louder to the glory of Jehovah. In the heathen mythology we are told, that when the Sirens warble their soft, seducing strains, to allure heedless mortals into the paths of unlawful pleasure, two different methods were made use of, to escape the snare. Some rendered themselves incapable of hearing, while others overpowered their songs by chanting divine hymns. The story is fabulous, but the moral just, and apposite to the subject in hand. For there is no doubt that the heart may be weaned from every thing base and

mean, and elevated to every thing that is excellent and praiseworthy, by sacred music. The evil spirit may still be dispossessed, and the good spirit invited and obtained, by the harp of the Son of Jesse.

SACRED MUSIC.

MILTON.

BLESSED pair of Sirens, pledges of heaven's joy,
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce,
 And to our high raised phantasy present
 That undisturbed song of pure consent,
 Aye sung before the sapphire colored throne,
 To Him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
 Where the bright seraphim, in burning row,
 Their loud, uplifted angel trumpets blow,
 And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly ;
 That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise ;
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin
 Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 Oh ! may we soon again renew that song,
 And keep in time with heaven, till God, ere long,
 To his celestial concert us unite,
 To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light !

ADVANTAGES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

DR LEECHMAN.

A REGULAR attendance upon public worship and public instruction, is one of the most natural means that can be used to preserve a sense of God, and of the obligations of religion and morality on the minds of mankind. All devout affections and dispositions are cherished and strengthened by repeated acts and services ; so that every act of worship, even in private, contributes to promote a devout temper of mind. Public worship is adapted to produce stronger emotions ; for all our passions work more strongly in society than in solitude. When we observe the native marks and symptoms of devotion in others about us, our own devotion is heightened and prolonged. A strong passion of any kind, prevailing among multitudes, spreads itself and catches the spectators. This social devotion has a tendency to diffuse a sense of religion and religious obligations upon all, who in any way or with any view are present at it. Since, then, it is the tendency of social worship to give additional force to our devout affections, and to spread them among others, it must be admitted, that joint acknowledgments of our dependence on God, and of our subjection to his holy authority, together with joint thanksgivings for the manifold blessings we enjoy in

common, when made with solemnity and earnestness, have a natural tendency to increase and strengthen our pious dispositions, and thus habitually impress our minds with a deep sense of all moral and religious obligations.

But further. As public worship is fitted to impress the minds of hundreds or thousands at once, with a lively sense of their subjection to the authority of God, and of their obligations to do his will, so it is also suited to unite men closely in love and affection to one another; and consequently has a great influence towards maintaining peace, good will, and friendship among them, and thus engaging them to a ready performance of the duties which they owe as members of society, and as standing in particular relations to one another. Nothing indeed is better adapted to refine and strengthen all social affections than social worship. The sincere worshipper of God is called, by the precepts of Christianity, to suppress in his breast all the risings of unfriendly and malevolent passions, when he approaches to God in acts of worship. If he would hope to be an acceptable worshipper of that God who is love and dwells in love, he must not only stifle all unsocial dispositions during the time of religious service, but he must resolve to suppress, and, if possible, extinguish them at all times. For our great Instructor teaches, that if we bring our gift to the altar, and

there remember that our brother hath aught against us, we should leave our gift before the altar, and go away and first be reconciled to our brother, and then come and offer our gift. But besides the authority of the precept, religious considerations and impressions have a natural tendency to sweeten our dispositions towards our fellow worshippers; for when we seriously reflect, that even such persons, against whom we may think we have reason to entertain grudges, are now worshipping their and our Creator along with us; that they are perhaps as sincere as we are; that they are as much the children of his great family, as really entitled to his favor, and, perhaps, as acceptable to him, or more so, than we can pretend to be; such reflections have a natural tendency to soften our hearts, and make us forget our animosities. Our little interfering interests and competitions seem trifling and inconsiderable, when we consider ourselves in the august presence of the Great Judge of all the earth. When we are desirous above all things to please God, we become unconcerned and indifferent about lesser interests.

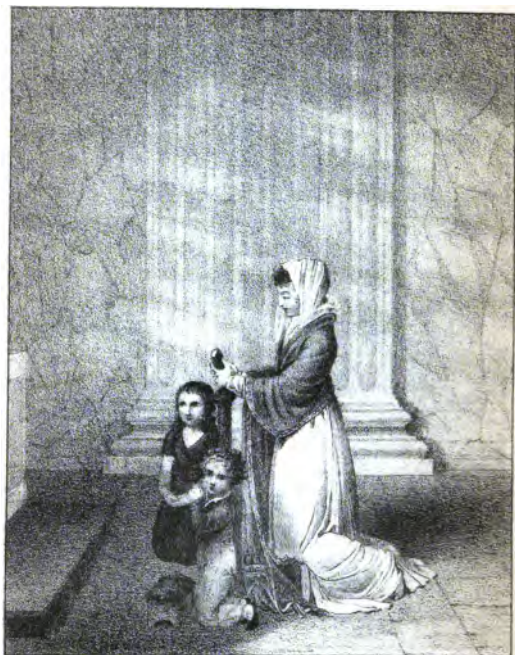
Nothing can be more suited to humble the pride and insolence of the rich and great, than to reflect upon themselves as equally with all others in the presence of that God who is no respecter of persons. A just sense of the presence of a

great, impartial Judge, annihilates all worldly distinctions, and places the high and the low quite on a level. When, therefore, the proud and haughty see those persons, whom, on ordinary occasions, they are accustomed to overlook and despise ; when they see them engaged in the worship of God along with themselves ; it must naturally suggest to them, that they are creatures of the same make with themselves, equally the offspring of God, and having immortal souls equally capable of the same high attainments and sublime enjoyments, arising from the knowledge, love, resemblance, and friendship of their Maker ; that they may be as far advanced in every thing really virtuous, and may be in all respects as worthy, in the eye of God who judges not by outward appearances, as they themselves can pretend to be. Such considerations, which naturally arise on the occasion, have a tendency to moderate, and even to root out, that pride and vanity which is apt to shoot up in the minds of those who are accustomed to contemplate their outward advantages with too selfish a complacency. The distance between the highest and lowest of mankind, must appear nothing to those who attend to the infinite distance between God and the most exalted order of creatures. And thus public worship is adapted to excite humble sentiments in the hearts of the highest of mankind, and to unite them in

the bonds of kindness and charity with the lowest.

In many cases, it may be difficult to point out the particular positive good effects, that have actually been produced by these religious institutions. But to convince us of the importance of them, let us suppose that all public worship and public instructions, that all the exhortations, admonitions, and reproofs, which are usually given in christian congregations, were totally interrupted for a considerable time ; for half a century, or even for twenty years. We should soon see that the worst effects would follow, that a sense of God and providence, of Jesus Christ and his divine religion, a sense of virtue and humanity, would be greatly weakened, if not entirely extinguished, and that the generality of the people would degenerate into a kind of barbarians. It has been the acknowledged sentiment of the wisest part of mankind, that, were it not for that sense of religion and order which is principally preserved, so far as it is preserved, by public forms and habits of worship, men would lose it entirely, run wild, prey upon one another, and soon become little better than the savages.

The great usefulness and importance of regular weekly assemblies for religious and moral purposes, was clearly discerned and acknowledged by the Roman emperor Julian, commonly called



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the Apostate, as inveterate an enemy as Christianity ever had. He saw the manifest good effects which the regular public instruction and public worship had upon the Christians in his age, and therefore recommended it to his heathen high priest to imitate the practice of the Christians, by appointing the philosophers to give stated weekly lectures for the instruction of the heathen people, and in support of paganism. This appeared to him the most probable method to restore the credit and influence of the heathen religion, which had fallen into contempt and decay. Thus we have the testimony of the keenest enemy of Christianity, in favor of the advantages flowing from regular assemblies for public worship and public instruction.

ADVANTAGES OF PRAYER.

DR LEECHMAN.

WHEN we take the most general view of prayer, we cannot help discerning the usefulness and advantages of it. When we consider that mankind in their present state, are deeply immersed in the business or enjoyments of the world; that external objects are perpetually striking upon their senses, playing before their imaginations, and

making impressions upon their hearts, it evidently appears to be an unspeakable advantage to them to have regular and stated seasons of recalling their minds from the numberless avocations of a vain world, and fixing them upon God, and spiritual things. The surest method of counterworking the impressions made on the soul by that crowd of worldly thoughts which pass through it, is to banish them entirely for some time, and lay it open by prayer and contemplation to the impressions of those heavenly and eternal objects, which, by their greatness, importance, and excellence, will engage and command attention. And, indeed, without proper seasons allotted to retirement and devotion, and frequently recurring, we are in the greatest danger imaginable of being under the full and uncontrolled power of those vain and perishing objects, which surround us in the world, and which are perpetually engaging the attention of our minds, and soliciting the love and affection of our hearts. Our Saviour takes notice of this, as one great advantage of prayer, that it is a preservative against the temptations of the world. 'Pray,' says he, 'that ye enter not into temptation.'

Now prayer has a natural tendency, in a great variety of ways, to break the force of those temptations to which we are necessarily exposed in life. It keeps alive in our minds an habitual sense of our danger, disposes us to keep a watchful eye

on those things from which our danger arises, and puts us in a proper posture for resistance and defence. It turns away our attention from those objects which raise impure desires and guilty passions in our bosoms. It calls up such a lively sense of the Divine presence, as must check the first risings of irregular inclinations, and fill us with dread and shame of thinking, saying, or doing any thing unworthy of those who aim at the approbation and favor of the great Judge of all. It presents the Divine perfections to our view, and inspires us with an abhorrence of every thing that would render us unlike to them. Whenever therefore we are assaulted with a temptation to gratify any impure or violent appetite or passion, let us accustom ourselves to stop till we have lifted our hearts to God in sincere and fervent prayer, that he may assist us in the conflict and give us the victory, and we shall soon feel the violence of the temptation abated; that we are enabled to exert a hidden strength, and for the present, to obtain an entire mastery over it.

2. Prayer puts us into the best frame and situation of mind for receiving the influences of heavenly light and grace. It promotes a certain softness and tenderness of heart, which renders the soul easily susceptible of the impressions of spiritual and divine objects. The soul, when duly softened and humbled by prayer, feels and sees in quite another

manner than when it is hardened and puffed up with pride and vanity. A deep sense of our ignorance disposes us to attend to, and follow every ray of light, how small soever; whereas pride of understanding shuts out the light, and turns away the attention from it. We should therefore consider prayer, and exercise ourselves in it, as the great means appointed by God for drawing down that wisdom from above, which is necessary to guide us to our higher country, and to settle us in eternal rest and happiness in our Father's house.

3. True devotion raises the human soul to an uncommon pitch of grandeur and elevation. The mind of man seems to adapt itself to the different nature of the objects with which it is conversant. It is contracted and debased by being employed in low and little things, and it is proportionally enlarged and exalted by the contemplation of those things which are great and sublime. The perfections of the Deity, his universal and eternal providence, the excellence of virtue and of those general laws of God which are the foundation and support of the order, the beauty, and the happiness of his whole rational kingdom; the dignity and immortality of the human soul, whereby it is capable of vast and endless improvements; these are objects of such a striking and exalted nature, that they must ennoble and enlarge the mind employed in contemplating them. All worldly and

transitory things must appear unworthy the love and pursuit of that soul which is raised above all created things, and which aspires to, and pursues that happiness which arises from the love, the resemblance, and enjoyment of the great Creator of all. There is no greatness of mind equal to that which springs from the divine ambition of aiming at a resemblance of God, and from the glorious hope of seeing him as he is, in some future period of existence. 'Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.'

3. True devotion gives a wonderful strength and firmness to the soul which is under the full power and influence of it. That man must adhere with inviolable constancy to whatever is good or great in life, who is animated with the hope of the Divine approbation, and who relies with assured confidence on the friendship, protection, and assistance of the great ruler of all things. No difficulties, no dangers, can terrify him who has that great being on his side, the sole, the sovereign disposer of all events. No temptations of pleasure or profit can allure him who trusts in an almighty friend, able to make him happy, in ten thousand methods, beyond what he can conceive. Every worldly thing vanishes at the presence of Him, before whom the world is as nothing, less than nothing, and vanity.

Even death itself is stripped of all its terrors to the pious man, when it is considered only as a removing that veil of flesh which interposes betwixt him and the invisible world; nay, death itself is desirable, as it discloses new scenes of wonder and delight, and admits the devout soul to the more immediate presence of God, where there are rivers of pleasure for evermore.

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT.

ATTERBURY.

THE advantages which religious retirement affords us, are plainly such as these; that it unites and fixes our scattered thoughts; places us out of the reach of the most dangerous temptations; frees us from the insinuating contagion of ill examples, and hushes and lays asleep those troublesome passions, which are the great disturbers of our repose and happiness.

A dissipation of thought is the natural and unavoidable effect of our conversing much in the world, where we cannot help squandering away a great deal of our time upon useless objects, of no true worth in themselves, and of no real concern to us. We roll on in a circle of vain, empty pleasures, and are delivered over from one slight

amusement to another, ever seemingly very busy, and ever really very idle ; and applying ourselves without respite to that which it becomes us to neglect, and utterly neglectful of that one thing necessary, which it becomes us most to pursue. This gives us by degrees such a levity and wantonness of spirit, as refuses admittance to all serious thoughts, and renders us incapable of reflection ; makes our closet a terrible place to us, and solitude a burthen. To retrieve ourselves from this vain, roving, distracted way of thinking and living, it is necessary to retire frequently, and to converse much with what we above all things love, and yet above all things hate to converse with, ourselves ; to inure our minds to recollection, to fix them on the greatest and most concerning objects, those which religion suggests, and which will, by their importance, deserve, and engage and command, our attention, till the busy swarm of vain images that beset us be thoroughly dispersed, and the several scattered rays of thought, by being thus collected together, do by little and little, warm our frozen hearts, and at last produce an holy flame.

The expedience of retirement is yet greater, as it removes us out of the way of the most pressing and powerful temptations that are incident to human nature. Ye all know by experience, that these meet us most frequently in society, where

our senses, the great inlets of temptation, are most awakened, and tempting objects, by their number and nearness make the most vivid and lasting impression upon us. Indeed, there is no place, no state or scene in life, that hath not its proper and peculiar temptations; even solitude itself is not without them; but they are few and faint, in comparison with those to which our appearance on the great stage of the world exposes us; and whenever they attack us in our recesses, they do, or may, find us prepared and upon our guard; we are then at leisure to encounter them, and have helps near at hand, which, if made use of, will enable us to decline or baffle them. Whereas, in public we are merely passive to such impressions, which strike our minds so violently, and succeed each other so fast, that we have no opportunity, no strength, no inclination, almost, to withstand them.

The great risk which virtue runs in company, is, from the neighbourhood of ill examples, which are of so contagious a nature, that, if we live much amongst them, we shall as surely be corrupted by them, as he that often breathes in ill air, will at last partake of the infection. It is dangerous for the most innocent person in the world to be too frequently and nearly a witness to the commission of vice and folly. Such views lessen the natural horror we have for such actions, and render the thoughts of them more familiar and less displeas-

ing to us. Especially, when we are used to see ill things practised by persons whom we regard, the favorable opinion we have of the doer extends itself to the action done, and leads us insensibly from seeing to approving, and from approving to imitating. And thus being, the very best of us, prone to do evil, and living in the midst of evil ; being attacked thus from without, and betrayed from within, we are not capable of making an effectual resistance. The only refuge we have is in retreat, where we may at leisure correct the ill impressions that have been made upon us ; and by disuse and distance, weaken the force of those ill influences which we could not wholly avoid.

Another advantage which retirement affords us, is, that it calms and composes all the passions, those especially of the tumultuous kind, which, while the business and pleasures of life possess our hearts, are under a violent and restless agitation. We seldom mix long in conversation without meeting with some accident that ruffles and disturbs us ; somewhat that plays either upon our hopes or our fears, our aversions or desires. An injurious or slighting word is thrown out, which we think ourselves obliged to resent ; or some innocent expression of ours is misrepresented and resented by others, and that provokes a return. Our enemy comes in our way, and kindles thoughts of aversion and hatred in us. We look upon those

who are above us in all the advantages of life with envious eyes, and with contempt on those who are beneath us. Thus are we delivered over from passion to passion, tossed and disquieted in our minds, during the intercourse we maintain with the world. But when we quit it and retire, all these winds are presently laid, and there is a perfect calm. The objects which excited us being removed, our appetites also languish and die away ; we possess our souls in patience and peace, and enjoy a profound tranquillity and rest, the pleasure of which is great to those who are so happy as to have a relish for it, and is enhanced by being always tasted with innocence.

Wouldst thou, then, be free from envy and scorn, from anger and strife ? Fly from the occasions of them, steal away from the great scene of passion and business into thy privacy ; shut the doors about thee, commune with thine own heart in thy chamber and be still. There, all animosities are forgotten, all pursuits, all competition cease. There, all marks of distinction are laid aside ; the great and the lowly, the prince and the subject, are upon a level ; equally under the eye of one common Master, equally desirous of pleasing Him, and mindless of lesser interests and concerns. There, the vanities and vexations of this world are shut out, and the considerations of another are let in ; the

soul enjoys that sweet contentment and repose which it enjoys no where else on this side heaven.

PROFANENESS.

G. GREGORY.

IT is a very trite observation, that of all vices profaneness is that which is least productive of either profit or pleasure. Indeed, I believe it will be a very difficult matter to specify any one advantage resulting from it, or any one rational motive for the practice of it. It cannot be necessary to confirm every common assertion in conversation with an oath. It is the worst compliment we can possibly pay to ourselves, to afford any room for suspicion that our word would not be taken, on every trifling occasion. It is a demeaning of ourselves; it is an affront upon our company; and there is this further absurdity attending it, that he who cannot be believed on his word, is seldom credited on his oath.

But the truth is, this is very seldom, if ever, the motive to common swearing. It is in general intended to give an air of boldness and courage, or else to fill up the vacancies of conversation where there is a barrenness of understanding, and to substitute words in the place of ideas. As to the

first, give me leave to observe, that is no true courage which bids defiance to the majesty of Heaven, to decency, good order, and good manners. It is no uncommon artifice of cowardice to make a show of bravery where the danger seems remote. I must however remark, that the device but seldom succeeds, even with the very vulgar. When so much pains are taken to acquire the appearance of any thing, a suspicion always arises that the reality is wanting, and the end is actually counteracted by the imprudent means which are employed to effect it.

The other plea is, I confess, somewhat more specious. I am ready to admit that scarcity of ideas, is, on some occasions, an inconvenience ; and very possibly, the limited faculties of some persons may absolutely require assistance of certain commonplace phrases, and even of oaths, to give them the appearance of speaking animals. As the reputation, however, of a barren understanding, is not very agreeable, and as the device is now detected and exposed, I would not advise any person, who perceives in himself a want of ideas, to put in practice so hackneyed a stratagem. I would rather advise him to avoid profaneness as he would avoid the reputation of ignorance, emptiness, and weakness of understanding.

Indeed, as knowledge becomes more diffused, and as conversation improves, I trust I am not mis-

taken in the hope that profaneness is at present going gradually out of fashion. I know that it is of the utmost importance to every person, who wishes to write or to speak with elegance and correctness, to observe a delicacy and politeness of language in his common conversation. The style which is eked out with oaths, or commonplace expressions of any kind, will naturally be lame and incorrect on occasions, when these cannot be introduced. Whoever, therefore, would appear either the gentleman or the scholar, ought, on every occasion to avoid them.

To those who have any degree of faith in the truth of revelation, the absurdity of this vice must be instantly apparent. It must be instantly apparent, that the vices of the tongue are intimately connected with the vices of the heart; that an abandonment of principle, a levity of manners, will constantly accompany a levity and licentiousness of conversation. Our minds are the creatures of habit; our actions are the consequents of our ideas. Profaneness, therefore, naturally lessens those respects, which ought ever to be esteemed sacred. The tongue cannot use the name of God in a free, unlicensed manner, without taking from that reverence which the welfare of society and of our own souls, requires we should ever retain for him. The solemn oaths, which justice employs for the general safety and tranquility, become a mockery

and a jest in the eye of him who swears commonly, wantonly, and falsely. In a word, since the Almighty has thought proper to prohibit it in so solemn a manner, to practise a vice, which neither can contribute to our temporal interest or our temporal pleasure, is certainly but few degrees short of actual insanity.

All vices are more easily prevented than reformed; and, as this is not a vice of passion, but of habit only, and is frequently, I might say generally, acquired by imitation only, one most obvious mode of preventing it, is to avoid the company and conversation of those, whose contagious manners may affect the rectitude of our hearts, and especially of those minor wits, who would purchase at an easy rate a few transient applauses from dulness and ignorance, by retailing the trite objections of infidel and profligate writers. In this too, too liberal age, such a caution will be thought, or rather will be said, to savor of bigotry. But let us not, I entreat you, in our zeal for toleration, forget that there is a very ample difference between persecution and encouragement; between actually laying violent hands upon a man for the sake of his opinions, and giving countenance and support to those opinions by taking that man to our bosom. The utmost stretch of charity surely cannot require an entire sacrifice of common sense and private happiness. It is impossible to esteem

that man my friend, who would deprive me of every dearest hope, of every best of comforts, would leave me without a single motive to virtue and single principle of belief. Let such a man enjoy with freedom his own gloomy and discontented disposition; but let me enjoy at least the same equal liberty, and give me leave only to make choice of my company. May the God of truth and righteousness ever defend us from that liberality, which shall induce us to become tame and patient spectators of blasphemy and impiety, 'to stand in the way of sinners, and to sit in the seat of the scornful.'

This caution applies principally, indeed, to the inexperienced and the young. To those sinners, who may have deviated from the paths of truth and piety, and yet wish to return, it may be satisfactory to add, that of all vices, this of profaneness is perhaps the most easy to be reformed. Even when the habit is already fixed, a few exertions will reclaim it. It is but putting a slight restraint upon yourself at first; and this restraint will be attended with a further advantage; namely, that it will reduce you by degrees, to the habits and order of a religious life, teach you to subdue other evil propensities, make you acquainted with discipline, and render it easy and commodious to you.

To insist on the danger of continuing in the habit must be totally unnecessary after what has been

said, and since the consequences of unrepented sin are so notorious, and so generally understood. There is, however, one doctrine of our religion, which will perhaps be more effectual than any other in promoting your reformation. I therefore conclude with earnestly recommending it to your most serious attention. As Moses gave the law to the children of Israel, I give it you,—‘for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes;’ for a maxim to be engraven on your hearts, and of which you are never to lose sight,—‘by our words we shall be justified, and by our words we shall be condemned; and, at the last great day, every idle word must be accounted for.’

GOVERNMENT OF THE PASSIONS.

G. GREGORY.

To JUDGE more perfectly concerning the necessity of subduing our passions, let us but mark their effects upon the individual. The man who is under the dominion of passion, is incapable of any great or virtuous undertaking. The abject slave of appetite, he mingles with the common instinctive herd, and his thoughts are never elevated for a moment above the grovelling pursuits of the brute creation. Propelled by the love of passion, every trifling incident is able to disappoint and

disconcert him ; and, as the gratification of appetite is transitory, the very completion of his wishes is satiety and disgust. As guilt is the consequence of every unlawful passion, he has to encounter shame, and remorse of conscience, and the fear of discovery. As expense and profusion are ever connected with vicious pursuits, he is generally in want, he is haunted with importunate creditors, he is abridged of his liberty, he is obliged to submit to innumerable meannesses, and, possibly, he is at length engaged in some criminal action to supply his prodigality, which brings him with sorrow and late contrition, to an ignominious end.

It would doubtless be highly satisfactory to be able to guide you out of the track of these alarming evils, and to be instrumental in rescuing you from the fatal empire of passion. Your own sagacity will point out many motives and expedients, and, if you heartily wish and resolve to dedicate yourselves to the practice of virtue, the grace of God will strengthen and assist you. I shall nevertheless briefly state a few of the most practicable means of cultivating good and virtuous affections, and of eradicating vicious and corrupt propensities from the heart.

1. Let me exhort you earnestly to recommend yourselves to the peculiar care and attention of the Divine Providence ; to pray, morning and eve-

ning, that he will strengthen your good intentions, and correct whatever he observes amiss. For, if you lose your religion, or become remiss in these duties, I must tell you, that every other foundation of morality is laid upon the sand; and if you prove good, it will be, as it were, by chance.

2. Whatever leisure you may have, employ it in the reading of good books. By the term good books, I do not mean to confine you to books of devotion; I mean books that will inform your understanding and refine your sentiments; all, in a word, that have a virtuous or moral tendency. By thus cultivating the intellectual pleasures, your minds will become elevated above the sensual; you will experience enjoyments of the sublimest nature, and unalloyed by any mixture of gall or bitterness.

3. You cannot be too careful in the choice of your company. It is almost unnecessary to inform you, that the instances are few of persons depraved by the natural force of passion, in comparison with the multitudes who owe their ruin to the allurements of bad company. Connected with this, is the obligation to avoid most carefully every species of indelicacy or licentiousness in conversation. In an age, indeed, when almost every person aims at the reputation of wit, it is no wonder that obscene allusions should be in some measure in fashion, since they enable a man to

purchase the character at so very cheap a rate. That mind, however, which can condescend to entertain a company in such a manner; a company, who can patiently lend their attention to such entertainment, must be filthy and depraved in no trifling degree. He must be as weak as well as a wicked man, who wishes to publish his vices. It may, therefore, contribute to lessen the taste for this species of mock wit, to remark, that it can only be from a barrenness of real wit that men have recourse to it, and I have seldom known it practised but by very shallow persons. Mark the observation, that, unless it be through a pre-concerted design upon the innocence of some of the company, the man who offends your modesty and delicacy by licentious conversation, is not only a very wicked person, but a fool.

In the fourth place, 'Be temperate in all things.' Those who indulge in the excesses of the table, can never answer properly for their own conduct, as, at seasons, they will not, they cannot, be their own masters. Besides, temperance and sobriety are among the first duties of our religion, and the practice of them will render us more particularly objects of the divine favor and protection.

5. Apply diligently to some lawful calling, which will absorb your attention, and engage that active principle, the mind. Suffer your thoughts as lit-

tle as possible to wander from the track of virtue, and, if the enemy should at any time attack you, for it is in the hours of indolence that the tempter sows his tares, be instantly upon your guard, and divert your thoughts into some other channel, either of business or devotion.

The force of habit, and the accommodating power of the human mind, afford encouragement, not only to the young and innocent to persevere in the path of virtue, but even to those who have been less cautious in their demeanour to rectify their choice. The infinite superiority of the intellectual over the sensual pleasures, has been asserted by all who have made the experiment, and this ought to be an inducement to every reflecting being to direct his attention to those nobler objects. To acquire good habits is almost as easy as to acquire bad ones; nay, those who are yet undepraved will have much more to surmount, will find more real difficulty, in deviating into vicious excesses, than in adhering to that order and regularity, in which they are already initiated; and even the habitually vicious will find the victory much easier than they at first conceive. The passions are furious assailants, but their ardor is presently quelled by a spirited resistance. No man, I presume, who has the remotest belief in the truth of revealed religion, can possibly be at ease in his conscience, while engaged in the com-

mission of those crimes, the end of which he is convinced can be only a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. You who are involved in the giddy vortex of fashionable dissipation; you who sin through ignorance perhaps of your danger, or at least for want of attending to it; you, I exhort to bestow one hour's serious consideration on this important subject. Go, then; and, if there be any consolation in Christ, any fellowship in the Spirit, go, like the reformed Athenian youth, tear the ensigns from your brow, the festal garments from about your neck.* You have a much greater master to imitate. If the speech and practice of a heathen philosopher could work such a change in him, what ought the precepts of the gospel, and the example of the Son of God, to effect in us?

* Palemon, a young man of Athens, of a dissolute character, entered the school of Xenocrates one day, intoxicated, and in the dress of a bacchanal, with a view of making merry at the expense of the philosopher. Xenocrates was just at that time discoursing upon temperance and modesty. The discourse made such an impression upon Palemon, that it produced an immediate change in his manners. He applied himself to philosophy, and succeeded to the care of that very seminary, which he had attempted to disturb and insult.

HABITUAL REMEMBRANCE OF GOD.

GISBORNE.

SUFFER me to illustrate by some examples the duty of setting Almighty God, always, at all times, and under all circumstances, before you.

Be it supposed that you are prosperous. Your prosperity you owe to God. It is to him, and to him only, that you are to look for the continuance of the whole, and of any part, of your happiness. It is he who has filled your cup with blessings, and who keeps it full. It is he who has conferred success on your industry and exertions. It is he who has raised you up friends. It is he who has given you cause to rejoice in your relations and in your children. It is he only who can bestow upon you farther mercies in addition to the blessings which he may permit you to retain, or in the place of those which his wisdom may take away. Be grateful, then, for every mark of his loving kindness with which you have been favored. Give daily proof that you are sincerely and warmly thankful for his bounties, by possessing them with an humble heart, and by cheerfully employing a large portion of them for the good of your fellow creatures.

But you are encompassed by adversity and affliction. Your comforts are curtailed, your dili-

gence fails of its reward. Sickness preys upon your strength. The stroke of death deprives you of near kindred, and even of your offspring. Fix your eyes on the Lord your God. Remember that no affliction overtakes you without his permission. Remember that the event, which you now deem a calamity, may hereafter prove to have been most conducive to your eternal interests. Remember that distress and sorrow are mercifully sent by your heavenly Father, as chastisements for your good in the end. You are by nature disposed to dote on the present world, and to think little of that which, whether you think of it or not, is assuredly to come. If God were not pleased continually to admonish you by crosses and disappointments, by infirmities of body and anxieties of mind, that here you are not long to remain, that on earth no durable happiness is to be enjoyed; you would dismiss the next life from your thoughts; you would forget to work out your salvation with fear and trembling; you would make no serious and habitual preparation for your appearance before your Judge. Consider what numbers there are, who, in contempt of all these warnings, set their hearts upon the present world, and neglect and despise their God. Consider whether, notwithstanding, you are not yourself neglecting or despising him. Think then to what excesses of carelessness and presumption you

would probably have been carried, if such warnings had not been commissioned perpetually to remind you of your duty. Bear your tribulation, whatever it may be, patiently. Rejoice in it as the appointment of the wisdom and mercy of God. Rejoice in it as a lesson of faith and righteousness and true holiness.

You are flourishing in the vigor of youth. Shall the tree withhold from the planter the prime of its fruit? When wilt thou serve thy God, if not now? Dost thou count on years to come, thou who art a passing shadow, a dewdrop of the morning, a flame which an instant may extinguish? I have seen a young man 'in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and lo! he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.' Dost thou postpone the remembrance of thy Creator unto the evil days of old age? Hear thou the language of thy thoughts. 'O God! I love thee not. Power I love, riches I love, pleasure I love. To these objects I have devoted my heart; to these, I would willingly dedicate my whole life. But on that resolution, I dare not venture. Though I love thee not, I am afraid of thee. I will take a middle path. . The noon of life I will give to my darling pursuits. And when declining years shall strip indulgence of its relish, I will assign a portion of my time to thee.' Dost thou recoil from

such baseness? Dost thou tremble at such ingratitude? Set the Lord thy God before thee. Honor him with his own gifts. Consecrate to him the best of thy strength. Consecrate to him the whole of thy strength. Be thou like a green olive tree in the house of God, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season.

But age has already stamp'd its characters upon thee. Does the ancient tree count on length of years? Does it refuse to its owners the scanty produce, which it still has energy to supply? Its summit is bare; its branches are sapless; its trunk is hollow; its roots are decayed. The earliest blast may lay it low. Even sooner it may perish by the sentence, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground.' Planted in the christian church, the garden of God, hast thou been wilfully barren during the fulness of thy vigor, and art thou wilfully barren still? Or, if hitherto productive, dost thou at length refuse thy God the tribute, which his nurturing grace even yet enables thee to offer? Remember the Lord thy rock, and the High God thy redeemer. Let it suffice that youth deludes itself with distant prospects. Thou art about to put off thy tabernacle; the time of thy departure is at hand. The night cometh; work while it is called to-day. In the grave, there is no repentance; seek mercy while yet it may be found.

GOD OMNIPRESENT.

JAMES EDMESTON.

WHERE can I go from thee,
 All present Deity !
 Nature, and time, and thought thine impress bear ;
 Through earth, or sea, or sky,
 Though far afar I fly,
 I turn and find thee present with me there.

The perfume of the rose,
 And every flower that blows,
 All mark thy love, in clusters of the vale ;
 The corn that crowns the fields,
 The fruits the garden yields,
 Proclaim the bounties that can never fail.

The vapor, and the cloud,
 The thunder bursting loud,
 Speak of thy majesty in words of flame ;
 The ocean as it roars,
 Lashing the rocks and shores,
 Declares from what a mighty hand it came.

The vasty globes that roll,
 Each on its own firm pole,
 Through all the boundless fields of space alone,
 Prove that indeed thou art
 The life wheel, and the heart
 Of systems to our little world unknown.

From thee I cannot fly ;
Thine all observing eye,
Marks the minutest atom of thy reign ;
How far soe'er I go,
Thou all my path wouldst know,
And bring the wanderer to this earth again.

But why should I depart ?
'Tis safety where thou art ;
And could one spot thy being hold,
I, poor, and vain, and weak,
That sacred spot would seek,
And dwell within the shelter of thy fold.

MATERNAL RESIGNATION.

FROM 'HEBREW TALES.'

SUCH a blessing had the celebrated teacher Rabbi Mier found. He sat during the whole of one sabbath day in the public school, and instructed the people. During his absence from his house, his two sons, both of them of uncommon beauty and enlightened in the law, died. His wife bore them to her bedchamber, laid them on the marriage bed, and spread a white covering over their bodies.

Towards evening, Rabbi Mier came home.

'Where are my beloved sons,' he asked, 'that I may give them my blessing?'

'They are gone to the school,' was the reply.

'I repeatedly looked round the school,' he replied, 'and did not see them there.'

She reached him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the sabbath, drank, and again asked, 'Where are my two sons, that they may drink of the cup of blessing?'

'They will not be far off,' she said, and placed food before him that he might eat.

He was in a gladsome and genial mood, and when he had said grace after the meat, she thus addressed him; 'Rabbi, with thy permission, I would fain propose to thee one question.'

‘Ask it then, my love!’ he replied.

‘A few days ago, a person entrusted some jewels to my custody; and now he demands them again, should I give them back again?’

‘This is a question,’ said Rabbi Mier, ‘which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What! wouldst thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every person his own?’

‘No,’ she replied; ‘but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith.’

She then led him to their chamber, and stepping to the bed, took the white covering from their bodies.

‘Ah my sons! my sons!’—thus loudly lamented the father,—‘my sons! the light of mine eyes, and the light of my understanding; I was your father, but ye were my teachers in the law.’

The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length she took her husband by the hand, and said, ‘Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was in our keeping? See, “the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord.”’

SUBMISSION
TO THE WILL OF PROVIDENCE.

GLENER.

IT was the complaint of Alphonsus, that God might have ordered many things better in the creation of the world than he has done; but the answer of St Augustin was as just as the censure was profane. If we complain of defect in the works of creation, it is because we do not understand them, in their proper spheres and uses. Though this complaint of the philosopher, and the answer of the divine, were concerning the system of the creation, yet there are too many persons, who, concerning the accidents of life, show the discontented temper of the first, and deserve the reproof of the latter. As nothing is more foolish, nothing can be more unjust, than the dissatisfaction which is shown at those distributions which Providence has made; for it is not in the power of human nature, to know what would prove really beneficial or detrimental; what would produce them a sincere joy, or plunge them into the deepest misery. There is an excellent reflection, which an ancient philosopher has made on this subject. If all the misfortunes of all the men in the world were crowded together in one heap, and then every man out of this heap were to take but an equal share,

he believed that every man would rather resume his own, than, after a proportionable rate, take what should then fall to him.

Argument and examples on this subject are almost infinite. I shall therefore make use of a parable which Dr H. More has told in his Divine Dialogue. It makes a deeper impression than the closest reasoning, and, while it strikes the fancy, convinces the judgment.

The story runs thus :—A certain hermit, not well satisfied with the administration of this world and its affairs, and the divers occurrences of Divine Providence in relation to it, resolved to quit his cell and travel abroad, to view the course of things, and make what observations he could, whereby to form a judgment of what disturbed him. He had not gone above half a day's journey, before he was overtaken by a young stranger, who came up to him and joined company with him, who so insinuated himself into the hermit's affections, that he thought himself happy in having so soon met with so agreeable a companion. As their journey lay the same way, they agreed to eat and lodge always at one house, wheresoever they came. They travelled some few days before the hermit took notice of any thing that occurred worthy his observation ; but at length he could not but be concerned to see, that at a house where they were very kindly and generously entertained, his fellow

traveller, with whom by this time he had contracted an endearing friendship, at his departure stole a gold cup, and took it away with him. The hermit was astonished that his friend, whom he thought a devout Christian, should be guilty of theft and ingratitude, where he had received such particular obligations. He was, however, resolved to see what his behaviour would be at other places, before he inquired into it. At night they came to a house of as ill accommodations as the other was good, and where the owner was a man of so morose and inhospitable a temper, that they were a long time denied admittance, and when received, were treated with the utmost surliness and brutality; yet such was the different carriage of the young traveller to the morose host, that in the morning he rewarded his inhumanity with his gold cup, which he left behind him in one of the windows. The hermit was not less surprised at this sight than the former, and could not fathom the mystery of so unequal a procedure; yet he still took no notice either of one action or the other. The next night they by agreement returned to the house from whence the cup was taken. They were treated as courteously as before, but the return for it was more shocking and astonishing; for, at their leaving the place, the hermit saw his companion privately strangle a little child as it lay in the cradle, the only child of the family, and in whom

all the temporal happiness of both father and mother were centred. Notwithstanding this last action, he prevailed with himself to contain himself another day ; and at night they came to a house of the best entertainment they had met with yet, the master of it doing every thing, not only to accommodate them, but to divert them, and make their stay pleasant. In the morning, as the way they were to go was intricate, he sent a faithful servant, in whose fidelity he had the greatest confidence, to conduct them. Thus they travelled for a while, till, coming to a bridge, which crossed a deep and rapid stream, the young traveller, on a sudden, laid violent hands on the servant, and threw him into the water and drowned him. Upon this the hermit could contain no longer, but charged his companion with ingratitude, theft, and murder. He enlarged on the heinousness of his crimes in the barbarous requitals he had made his benefactors, and concluded by telling him he was resolved to leave so vile and wicked a companion, return to his cell, and confine himself there for ever, rather than converse with mankind, who committed such crimes without remorse of conscience.

But now behold as strange a sight of another kind. The young man, smiling at the honest zeal of the hermit, putting off his mortal disguise, appeared to him in the form and lustre of an angel of God, telling him he was sent to ease his mind of the

perplexity and doubts he had so long labored under, as to the Divine Providence. 'What you have seen,' said he, 'seems astonishing and unaccountable; but in reality, nothing could be more just and equitable; which, for want of your right understanding, has been so great an offence to you. To prove this, know that the first man from whom the cup was taken, had the best compensation made for his kindness, the cup having occasioned great mischiefs while he had it. He is, indeed, courteous and hospitable, but has one great failing, which tarnishes those good deeds; that is, an inclination to drink more than becomes him, and especially when this cup was brought out. Therefore, the best office I could do was to remove this temptation, that he might be brought to a better government of himself. When I had taken away this snare, I left it with the morose inhospitable man, as a means of his destruction, that by it he might fall into intemperance, diseases, and even death itself; for there is an enchantment in this cup, that whoever possesses it will be in danger of being bewitched by it. But perhaps you think nothing can be said for my strangling the little innocent babe in the cradle, and in a place where I had been so civilly entertained. Know, then, that this was done in great mercy to the parents, and no real hurt to the child, who is now in happiness in heaven. This gentleman and his

wife had hitherto lived in great reputation for their piety, justice, sobriety, and other christian virtues ; but, above all, their charity was eminent. Divers of their sick and indigent neighbours owed their subsistence, next under God, to their munificence ; but since the birth of this child, their minds have degenerated into a love of this world. They were no longer charitable, but their whole thoughts have been employed how to enrich themselves, and leave a great fortune to this infant and its posterity. Hence I took this momentary life from the body of the child, that the souls of the parents might live for ever ; and I appeal to you if this was not the greatest act of kindness and friendship to them. There remains one action more to defend, my destroying the servant of the gentleman who had used me with such extraordinary civility, and who professed a great esteem for his fidelity. But this was the most faithful instance of gratitude I could show to one who used me so kindly ; for this servant was in fact a rogue, and had entered into a conspiracy to rob and kill his master. Now know, "that Divine Providence is just, and the ways of God are not as your ways, nor his thoughts as your thoughts ; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than your ways, and his thoughts than your thoughts." At these words he vanished, leaving the good man to meditate on what had

passed, and the reasons given for it; who here-upon, transported with joy and amazement, lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, and gave glory to God, who had delivered him from his anxiety about the ways of Divine Providence. Satisfied as to the wisdom of God's dealings, and those unseen reasons for them which surpass all human conception, he returned with cheerfulness to his cell, and spent the residue of his life in piety and peace.

FINDING OF MOSES.

GRAHAME.

Slow glides the Nile ; amid the margin flags,
Closed in a bulrush ark, the babe is left—
Left by a mother's hand. His sister waits
Far off, and pale, 'tween hope and fear, beholds
The royal maid, surrounded by her train,
Approach the river bank—approach the spot
Where sleeps the innocent. She sees them stoop
With meeting plumes ; the rushy lid is oped,
And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears ;
As when along a little mountain lake,
The summer south wind breathes with gentle sigh,
And parts the reeds, unveiling, as they bend,
A water lily floating on the wave.

ON THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

GLEANER.

A GENTLEMAN, a man of genius and discernment, whose ill health had compelled me to banish him into the country, and whose disrelish for the joys of the bottle, or the pleasures of the chase, naturally condemned him to many hours of solitude, in his retirement wrote me word some weeks since, that he had read through the books I had recommended to him to take down, and desired me to tell him what the world offered new. I was sure his understanding would countenance what I had to propose to him. I recommended, instead of new books, the oldest in the world; I advised him to the bible; and rested my future credit with him upon it, that if he would give it as fair a reading as he had done the trifles which had of late engaged his attention, he would confess it was the only book in the world that deserved it. I have received many letters from him since, and not one of them without confirmations of the assent, which his first brought to my opinion; not one, without encomiums on the particular part in which he was at that time engaged, amounting almost to an enthusiastic rapture.

I would wish that a real instance of this kind might recommend the same road to pleasure, to a

multitude of people, as little acquainted as he was with a book whose name is familiar to every body. There never was an age in which reading was a more universal employment than this; and I am sorry to add, there never was one, in which the works usually read, so little deserved it. The unlucky disposition to things that are new, is not peculiar to my correspondent; every body falls too much into it; and to such a height is the custom growing, that a man is hardly qualified for conversation, who is not as well acquainted with the characters of the last romance, as with the names of the heroes and heroines on the stage of life. Novelty, I own, is a very interesting plea to us; but, surely, it is not the period of time elapsed, but the acquaintance we have formed with the work, that makes it new or old to our acquaintance. Things which we have never heard before, are new to us, though transacted in the most distant era; and books, which we have not read, must be equally possessed of that charm, though coeval with the creation.

A chapter in the bible, it is too certain will be, to the generality of modern readers, as much a novelty as one in Tom Jones could be, when new fallen from the almost creative pen of its author; and I have so good an opinion, or, to use a juster phrase, so much knowledge of the present state of the polite world, that, in spite of all their flights

and wildnesses, I am persuaded a man who could give a good account of the one, would be at least as well received by the company, as he who could exert himself in comments on the other.

There is, indeed, no work in which we meet with so much to delight and to improve, to ravish and to instruct us; no work in which lessons of morality are delivered with so pleasing a familiarity, or so compulsive an authority;—strange combination! but inviolably preserved!—none, in which facts so great or so interesting are related, nor any other that has language equal to the subjects.

If Longinus knew any thing of the sublime in writing, the scriptures must be full of it; since his whole work, compared with their several parts, seems but a comment on their beauties; and if there be any thing in what has been written by Quintilian of the force of oratory, the power of selfassistant arguments, there we behold it all. No work was ever at once so animated, and so correct; so plain, and so full of elegance. What is said of architecture, is equally true of style; that simplicity is the source of all true beauty, and that a profusion of misplaced ornaments and figures, while they strike the eyes of children and idiots, accuse the structure, to the discerning eye, of barbarism. Different authors have made approaches toward excellence, in the different man-

ners of writing, but it is in this work alone, that we are to look for perfection in all ; nor is this a wonder, when we recollect that the others are the products of limited and imperfect conceptions, this of unbounded and infallible ; that they are human, this divine. We admire Livy for his historic fire, and Seneca for his morality ; but let us compare Livy with Moses, or Seneca with the author of the Proverbs, and we shall be ashamed of the preeminence we have been used to give them, in their several capacities ; nor among the poets, will Homer and Pindar make any better figure, under an impartial eye, in the comparison with the Psalmist and Isaiah.

The scriptures are the language of the Creator to his creatures ; they convey to us the duties from those who have received blessings, to him from whom they flow ; they inform us what imports our happiness, not for a few transient years, but for an eternity ; and lead the way to the enjoying that eternity in bliss. He who formed us with organs capable of enjoyment, has placed that enjoyment before our eyes ; and, that we may not be called off from the pursuit by shadows and pretences on the way, he tells us they are but such ; that this existence is our journey to happiness, not our period for it ; and, in these works, he has given us infallible precepts for the employing the means so as to obtain the end.

The first article advanced in the sacred writings is the existence of a God. The next thing we are informed of, is, that we and every thing about us are the works of his hands. We are told, that he intended us for happiness, and that he exacted no conditions but our obedience. His laws are afterwards laid down, and dreadful instances produced of the effects of violating them. His peculiar favor to the people who most, though that very imperfectly, obeyed his institutions, is delivered with a warmth that ought to animate every reader in the cause of obedience ; and lessons of morality, histories of amazing works, songs of praise to him, and promises of his mercy, his favor, and protection to those who pay due reverence to his will, are interspersed in every other part. We cannot but form, from the first, an idea of the Creator as full of beneficence and truth, of goodness and of wisdom ; and every article of the sacred writings contains proof of all. We are taught to think with a proper respect of his nature, and are informed of the imperfections as well as the advantages of our own. These lead us to the general offices of religion, and from these we are carried, step by step, to the more particular.

To be at once entertained and improved, is the full intent in reading ; nor is it worthy a rational creature to accept the amusement without the advantage. He who would have both in the highest

degree, must look up to the highest foundation of knowledge for them; he must drink from that eternal spring from which the purest of the others are but obscure and vague emanations.

PROOFS OF THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

DR CHANNING.

NEXT to the character of Christ, his religion might be shown to abound in circumstances which contradict and repel the idea of a human origin. For example, its representations of the character of God; its inculcation of a universal charity; the stress which it lays on inward purity; its substitution of a spiritual worship for the forms and ceremonies which every where had usurped the name, and extinguished the life, of religion; its preference of humility, and the mild, unostentatious, passive virtues, to the dazzling qualities which had monopolized men's admiration; its consistent and bright discoveries of immortality; its adaptation to the wants of man as a sinner; its adaptation to all the conditions, capacities, and sufferings of human nature; its pure, sublime, yet practicable morality; its high and generous motives; and its fitness to form a char-

acter, which plainly prepares for a higher life than the present; these are peculiarities of Christianity, which will strike us more and more in proportion as we understand distinctly the circumstances of age and country in which this religion appeared, and for which no adequate human cause has been, or can be, assigned.

Passing over these topics, each of which might be enlarged into a discourse, I will make but one remark on this religion, which strikes my own mind very forcibly. Since its introduction, human nature has made great progress, and society experienced great changes; and in this advanced condition of the world, Christianity, instead of losing its application and importance, is found to be more and more congenial and adapted to man's nature and wants. Men have outgrown the other institutions of that period when Christianity appeared; its philosophy, its modes of warfare, its policy, its public and private economy; but Christianity has never shrunk as Christianity has opened, but has always kept in advance of men's faculties, and unfolded nobler views in proportion as they have ascended. The highest powers and affections which our nature has developed, find more than adequate objects in this religion. Christianity is indeed peculiarly fitted to the more improved stages of society, to the more delicate sensibilities of refined minds, and especially to that dissatisfaction with

the present state, which always grows with the growth of our moral powers and affections. As men advance in civilization they become susceptible of mental sufferings, to which ruder ages are strangers; and these Christianity is fitted to assuage. Imagination and intellect become more restless; and Christianity brings them tranquillity by the eternal and magnificent truths, the solemn and unbounded prospects, which it unfolds. This fitness of our religion to more advanced stages of society than that in which it was introduced, to wants of human nature not then developed, seems to me very striking. The religion bears the marks of having come from a being who perfectly understood the human mind, and had power to provide for its progress. This feature of Christianity is of the nature of prophecy. It was an anticipation of future and distant ages; and when we consider among whom our religion sprung, where, but in God, can we find an explanation of this peculiarity?

MORAL PRECEPTS OF THE GOSPEL.

BOGUE.

By those who have been accustomed from their childhood to the reading of the New Testament, so that every part of it is familiar to their minds,

it is scarcely possible to form an idea of the difficulty of ascertaining the various relative duties among mankind, with such precision as to delineate exactly what is due to each. The writings of the evangelists and apostles have shed so clear a light on the subject, that some are apt to consider the knowledge of relative duties, which all the inhabitants of Christendom have, through various channels, derived from them, as originating in the reflections of their own minds, and as the spontaneous growth of the human heart, without labor, and without cultivation. But read the institutes of Menu, or peruse the books of the ancient sages of pagan antiquity in the West, and the fallacy will soon be detected. That some things there are good, and well said, must be obvious to all. But how defective are they in many points, and how unjust in others; how superstitious in more! Some duties are misstated; some are mutilated; some are entirely omitted; and many things are strenuously enjoined as duties, which are not. Their code of morals, even what is due from man to man, wants many leaves. As to the most important part of the system, namely, man's obligation to God, and the duties resulting thence, there is a still more dreadful deficiency. Instead of moral duties, we find little else but a hideous mass of superstitious rites, and unmeaning ceremonies.

In the New Testament there is a perfect system of moral precepts. What is due from man to himself, is delineated without defect and without redundancy. What he owes to his fellow creatures in all their different relations, is clearly defined, and authoritatively enjoined. None can say, 'It is unjust to require me to act thus to my father, to my master, to my servant, to my child.' Man's duty to God, a subject still more difficult, and where heathens failed the most, is laid down with equal clearness, and equal fulness. Nothing can be conceived to be a duty, which is not here enjoined; nor any thing enjoined as a duty, which we can say is unreasonable and ought not to be performed. The world may be challenged to mention one duty to God, or man, which the New Testament does not enjoin; or to prove any one thing it enjoins as a duty, to be destitute of reason, and void of obligation. The simplicity, the conciseness, the perspicuity, and the authority, with which they are delivered, give force to truth, and scope to reason, in the application of general duties to particular circumstances.

The morality of the writers of the New Testament is their own. They borrowed it from none. It begins at the source, and gives laws to the thoughts. Its precepts reach to the first workings of the heart. It enjoins purity of soul, and brings 'into captivity every thought to the obedi-

ence of Christ.' Not a vain imagination can be indulged, not an unhallowed desire rise up, without polluting the soul, and contracting guilt.

How different is this system from what was written and taught by the sages of Greece and Rome! Regard for a person's own fame and reputation, how exalted a place does it occupy among Pagan moralists! and an equal anxiety is discovered for the good opinion of others, and the approbation of the public. Their desire was to 'be seen of men, and they loved the praise of man more than the praise of God.' These the gospel utterly excludes. It authoritatively inculcates self-denial on all its votaries. It enjoins a supreme regard to what God approves; but to men, no farther than their approbation accords with God's, and is founded upon it. The disciples of Jesus are commanded to make their light shine before men; but the aim must be, not that they may be admired and praised, but that those who see their good works, 'may glorify their Father who is in heaven.'

The morality of the gospel is uncontaminated with the impure mixtures which have defiled every human system, published before or since. It admits no licentiousness; it enjoins no austerities; it contains no superstitions; it will be satisfied with no partial regard. In the religion of the Heathens and Mahometans, how many licentious

practices are tolerated and approved! Not one will the gospel allow, even in thought. What a multitude of superstitious observances do we perceive in every heathen code, in the koran, and in the talmud, which is the bible of the latter Jews! But let the bitterest enemy of Christ, who is best versed in the New Testament, take up the book, and point out one. Austerities, or practices consisting in privation of comfort, how congenial have they always been to human nature; and how exalted a niche have they always occupied in the religions of men in ancient days, and, at the present hour, among Pagans, Mahometans, Jews, and even among some who have assumed the Christian name! But where will a sanction for austerities be found in the gospel? Never is the idea even hinted at, that such things render a man acceptable to God, or advance him to a state of higher perfection. In perusing histories of religion, how often do we find reason to remark, that ritual observances have been made to supply the place of moral duties, and even zeal for, and abundance in one duty, to compensate for the neglect of another! But no partial regard will the gospel allow; it insists on universal obedience, and loudly declares, 'that he who offends in one point, is guilty of all.'

How the writers of this book should be able to draw up a system of morals, which the world,

after a lapse of eighteen centuries, cannot improve, while it perceives numberless faults, and suggests numberless corrections in those of the philosophers of India, Greece, and Rome, the deist is concerned to account for, in a rational way. The Christian is able to do it with ease. The evangelists and the apostles of Christ 'spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

IMPORTANCE OF SENSIBILITY TO PIETY.

V. KNOX.

It appears to me that the mind of man, when it is free from natural defects and acquired corruption, feels no less a tendency to the indulgence of devotion, than to love, or to any other of the more refined and elevated affections. But debauchery and excess contribute greatly to destroy all the susceptible delicacy with which nature usually furnishes the heart; and in the general extinction of our better qualities, it is no wonder, that so pure a sentiment as that of piety, should be one of the first to expire.

It is certain that the understanding may be improved in a knowledge of the world, and in the arts of succeeding in it, while the heart, or whatever constitutes the seat of the moral and senti-

mental feelings, is gradually receding from its original perfection. Indeed experience seems to evince, that it is hardly possible to arrive at the character of a complete man of the world, without losing many of the most valuable sentiments of uncorrupted nature. A complete man of the world is an artificial being; he has discarded many of the native and laudable tendencies of his mind, and adopted a new system of objects and propensities of his own creation.

These are commonly gross, coarse, sordid, selfish, and sensual. All, or either of these attributes, tend directly to blunt the sense of every thing liberal, enlarged, disinterested; of every thing which participates more of an intellectual than of a sensual nature. When the heart is tied down to the earth by lust and avarice, it is not extraordinary that the eye should be seldom lifted up to heaven. To the man who spends his Sunday in the countinghouse, in travelling, because the day is fit for little else, in a postcoach, in the tavern, or in the brothel; those who go to church appear as fools, and the business they go upon, as nonsense. He is callous to the feelings of devotion; but he is tremblingly alive to all that gratifies his sense or his interest.

It has been remarked of those writers who have attacked Christianity, and represented all religions merely as diversified modes of superstition,

that they were, indeed, for the most part, men of a metaphysical and a disputatious turn of mind, but usually little distinguished for benignity and generosity. There was, amidst all their pretensions to logical sagacity, a cloudiness of ideas, and a coldness of heart, which rendered them very unfit judges on a question in which the heart is chiefly interested; in which the language of nature is more expressive and convincing, than all the dreary subtleties of the dismal metaphysicians. Even the reasoning faculty, on which we so greatly value ourselves, may be perverted by refinement; and there is an abstruse, but vain and foolish philosophy, which philosophizes us out of the noblest parts of our noble nature. One of those parts of us is our instinctive sense of religion, of which not one of those brutes which the philosophers most admire, and to whose rank they wish to reduce us, is found, in the slightest degree, to participate.

Such philosophers may be called, in a double sense, the enemies of mankind. They not only endeavour to entice man from his duty, but to rob him of a most exalted and natural pleasure. Such, surely, is the pleasure of devotion. For when the soul rises above this little orb, and pours its adoration at the throne of celestial majesty, the holy fervor which it feels, is itself a rapturous delight. Neither is this a declamatory representation, but

a truth felt and acknowledged by all the sons of men; except those who have been defective in sensibility, or who hoped to gratify the pride or the malignity of their hearts, by singular and pernicious speculation.

RELIGION FAVORABLE
TO THE ENJOYMENTS OF LIFE.

DR BROWN.

So FAR is an implicit conformity to the dictates of our religion from being inconsistent with a proper care of worldly concerns, that, if we had no higher aim in view than merely to promote, or to secure, our temporal interests, we could hardly pursue a safer or more certain course, than a scrupulous observance of the rules prescribed by Christianity, for conducting us to future happiness. To increase or to preserve a fortune, what better means could we employ, than christian diligence and honesty? To rise to preferment and honor, what so efficacious as that inflexible integrity, that cheerful and ready submission to lawful superiors, that affable condescension to inferiors, that meekness and complaisance towards all, which the gospel enjoins? To ensure good will, to maintain a character, to acquire a reputation, could we adopt a better plan, than to cultivate christian prudence

and fortitude, joined with christian rectitude and charity, or, as our Saviour beautifully and emphatically expresses it, than to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves? In fine, if our sole object were to preserve health, to prolong life, or even to give a true relish to sensual enjoyment, could we follow any better course, than to practise christian activity in business, in conjunction with christian moderation and temperance? These are joys pure and substantial, suited to the dignity of the rational nature, independent of our brutal part. These can never be carried to excess, never succeeded by corroding reflection. Pleasing once, they please and delight us for ever. These, neither birth, nor external events, nor the dispositions of men, nor disease, nor age, can affect. They attend us in society, and forsake not in solitude. When enemies persecute us, they inspire with courage, and endue us with strength. When false friends abandon us, they remain. They solace adversity, and enhance and adorn prosperous circumstances. They lighten the burdens of life, and disarm death of his terrors. Compared with these, affluence is poor, grandeur is contemptible, sensual pleasure is disgusting. External circumstances are appropriated to no inherent dignity of character, and often the means of debasing it. But religious and moral enjoyments are the peculiar privileges of the wise and good, who

are not excluded from their share of worldly possessions, and can enjoy them with the highest relish. Still, should these be withheld, supported by their internal resources, by conscious integrity, by the exhilarating sense of the Divine favor, and by the glorious prospect of a blessed immortality, the piously wise must, even in adversity and affliction, be possessed of a more abundant store of happiness than can belong to the impious and wicked, placed on the summit of power, basking in the sunshine of prosperity, and resounding the loudest strains of dissolute mirth. Like a rock lowering above the deep, the man of piety and virtue beholds the storm of calamity roar around him, without shaking his resolution, or impairing his strength. When the tempest assails those of a contrary character, they are tossed, like the sand, from surge to surge, and, when the calm returns, sink under the weight of their own adversity.

ADVANTAGES OF THE SYMBOLICAL

STYLE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SIR W. JONES.

As PHILOSOPHY derived much of its influence from the powerful imagery of poetry in the ancient tragedies of Greece, so is the religion of revela-

tion greatly assisted and enforced by its figurative language, always pertinent and instructive ; and, on proper occasions, exceedingly sublime and beautiful.

The two ends of poetry, as they are laid down by the greatest master in the art, are to profit and to delight ; to give the best instruction under the most pleasing form. The means it uses for the attaining of these ends, is to inform the mind by presenting to the imagination those pictures and images of truth, which are to be gathered either from created nature or the actions of men, and the various scene of animal and social life. Philosophy and poetry differ in this respect ; that the one instructs by words and delivers its precepts literally ; the other, by images of things ; and if these images are lively and proper, then the mind is delighted with a moral, as the eye with the effect of a picture. Therefore good poetry under proper restrictions, is one of the greatest and best works of human art ; and has always been accounted divine, as proceeding from the assistance of heavenly beings. Even in the oratory of prose, the method of managing well an allusion or comparison, is of great value, because it is of great effect. He is the most agreeable speaker, who can open and adorn the argument of his discourse by some apt representation of truth from the nature of things. But in religious subjects, where

it is of the most consequence that men should hear attentively, and be persuaded effectually, there, this manner is most valuable of all.

How beautiful is that admonition of St James, from the propriety of the imagery under which the moral is conveyed! He exhorts to govern the tongue, which, though so small a member of the body, is yet of such great effect, that to govern the tongue is to govern the whole man. 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we turn about the whole body. Behold also the ships, which, though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.' Nothing upon the subject can possibly exceed the eloquence of this passage; and the apostle carries on his discourse all the way in the same beautiful style of allusion.

How were the lowest among his hearers captivated, when our Saviour discoursed to them in parables, explaining the doctrine of the kingdom of God from the scenes of nature which were daily before their eyes. The constitution of man's mind is still the same, in the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant; and the principle on which it must be engaged to receive instruction can never alter. We are to learn all things by

comparison; and the salvation of our souls depends so much on our improvement under this mode of teaching, that it is wisely provided by the Author of our nature, that we are so much delighted with imitation in every shape. All representations of the stage, which attract the multitude, are nothing but imitations of characters and scenes of imagery. Poetry, painting, and music, all engage the fancy with imitative effects of art. Mirth and sadness, conversation and devotion, the singing of birds and the confusion of a battle, are all imitable in musical sounds.

But this great plan of imitation is no where so conducted, nor carried to such a height, as in the signs and allegories of the holy scripture, which compose the richest scenery on earth. If the fancy of man is delighted with imitation, even in the smallest subjects, how much more, when the originals are objects of an eternal nature, and the delineation of them is from that wisdom, to which the things of time and the things of eternity are equally known; and which framed this visible world as a counterpart to the other.

SCOTTISH SACRAMENT SABBATH.

PETER'S LETTERS.

THE sacramental symbols were set forth at the upper extremity of a long table covered with a white cloth, which extended the whole length of the church, from the pulpit to the gate. At the head of this table, around which as many were already seated as it could at once accommodate, the minister of the place took his seat also. After his sermon was concluded, and he had read aloud several chapters of the bible, which are pointed out for this purpose in the Directory of the Scottish Church, as containing words suitable to the occasion, words of encouragement to the worthy, and of warning to the presumptuous communicant, he then craved a blessing, and having broken a single piece of bread and given of it to those immediately beside him, large loaves, cut into slices, were carried around the table, and distributed to all who sat at it, by two or three of the lay elders. The cup, in like manner, was sent round shortly afterwards, and during the time which elapsed in the distribution of these symbols, the minister delivered an address to those who were partaking in them. After the address was terminated, those who had been its immediate objects withdrew, and left their seats free for the occupation of another com-

pany, and so in the same manner did company succeed company throughout the whole of the day ; minister succeeding minister in the duty of addressing them, which is called in their language 'serving the tables.' Without pretending to approve of this method so much as of our own, nay, without attempting to disguise my opinion, that it is, in many respects, a highly improper method ; it would be in vain for me to deny that there was something extremely affecting even in its extreme simplicity, and still more so in the deep and overwhelming seriousness which seemed to fill the spirits of the partakers.

But the concluding evening scene was, without doubt, by far the most impressive of the whole. A tent had been erected at the foot of the churchyard, and from it different ministers preached to the multitude, which overflowed after the church itself was filled, during the whole of the day ; but now, after the sacrament had been dispensed to all who were admitted to that privilege, the kirk was shut up, and the whole of the thousands who had assembled were summoned to hear one parting sermon at the tent together.

There could not be a finer sight than that which presented itself to us when we came to the brink of the ravine which overhung, on the one side, the rustic amphitheatre, now filled with this mighty congregation. All up the face of the op-

posite hill, which swept in a gentle curve before us, a little brook flowing brightly between in the gleam of sunset, the soft turf of those simple sepulchres rising row above row, and the little flat tombstones scattered more sparingly among them, were covered with one massy cluster of the listening peasantry. Near to the tent, on one side, were drawn up some of the carriages of the neighbouring gentry, in which, the horses being taken away, the ancient ladies were seen sitting protected from the dews of the twilight, while the younger ones occupied places on the turf immediately below them. Close in front of the preacher the very oldest of the people seemed to be arranged together, most of them sitting on stools brought for them by their children, from the village, yet fresh and unwearied after all the fatigues of the day, and determined not to go away while any part of its services remained to be performed. The exact numbers of those assembled I cannot guess, but I am sure they must have amounted to very many thousands. Neither you nor I, I am confident, ever beheld a congregation of the fourth of the extent, engaged together in the worship of their Maker.

The number was enough of itself to render the scene a very interesting one ; but the more nearly I examined their countenances, the more deeply was I impressed with a sense of respectful sym-

pathy for the feelings of those who composed the multitude. A solemn devotion was imprinted on every downcast eyelid and trembling lip around me. Their attitudes were as solemn as their countenances, each having his arms folded in his shepherd's cloak, or leaning in pensive repose upon one of those grassy swells, beneath which,

‘ Each in his narrow tomb for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.’

Here and there I could perceive some hoary patriarch of the valley, sitting in such a posture as this, with the old partner of his life beside him, and below and around him two or three generations of his descendants, all arranged according to their age and propinquity; the ancient saint contemplating the group, ever and anon, with a sad serenity, thinking, I suppose, how unlikely it was that he should live long enough to find himself again surrounded with them all, on another recurrence of the same solemnity of the midsummer. Near them might be seen, perhaps, a pair of rural lovers, yet unwedded, sitting hand in hand together upon the same plaid, in the shadow of some tall tombstone, their silent unbreathed vows gathering power, more great than words could have given them, from the eternal sanctities of the surrounding scene. The innocent feelings of filial affection and simple love cannot disturb the feelings of devotion, but mingle well in the same

bosom with its higher flames, and blend all together into one softened and reposing confidence, alike favorable to the happiness of earth and heaven. There was a sober sublimity of calmness in the whole atmosphere around; the sky was pure and unclouded overhead, and in the west, only a few small fleecy clouds floated in richest hues of gold and crimson, caught from the slow farewell radiance of the broad declining sun. The shadows of the little church and its tombstones lay far and long projected over the multitude, and taming here and there the glowing colors of their garments into a more mellow beauty. All was lonely and silent around the skirts of the assemblage, unless where some wandering heifer might be seen gazing for a moment upon the unwonted multitude, and then bounding away, light and buoyant, across the daisied herbage into some more sequestered browsing place.

I wish, my dear Williams, you had been present with me at this closing scene of the Scottish sacrament sabbath, the only great festival of their religious year. You would then have seen what a fine substitute the Presbyterians have found, in the stirring up of their own simple spirit by such simple stimulants, for all the feasts, fasts, and holidays—yes, and for all the pompous rites and observances with which these are celebrated, of the church from which they have chosen so

widely to separate themselves. You would have seen, for who that has eyes to see and heart to feel could have been blind to it? that the austerities of the peculiar doctrinal system to which they adhere, have had no power to chill or counteract the ardors of that religious sentiment, which they share with all that belong to the wide spread family of Christians. You would have seen how compatible are all that we usually speak of as their faults, with every thing that we could wish to see numbered among the virtues of a christian people. You would have seen it in the orderly and solemn guise of their behaviour; you would have heard it in the deep and thrilling harmony of their untaught voices, when they lifted them all up together in that old tune which immemorial custom has set apart for the last psalm sung upon this sacred day—a tune; which is endeared to them by the memory of those from whose attachment its designation is derived, still more than by the low and affecting swell of its own sad composing cadences. ‘The plaintive martyrs, worthy of the name’. The faint choral falls of this antique melody, breathed by such a multitude of old and young, diffused a kind of holy charm over the tall whispering groves and darkening fields around, a thousand times more grand and majestic than all the gorgeous stops of an organ ever wakened in the echoing aisles of a cathedral.

There was a breath of sober enduring heroism in its long repeated, melancholy accents, which seemed to fall like a sweet evening dew upon all the hearts that drank in the sacred murmurs. A fresh sunset glow seemed to mantle in the palest cheek around me, and every old and haggard eye beamed once more with a farewell splendor of enthusiasm, while the air into which it looked up, trembled, and was enriched with the clear solemn music of the departed devout. It seemed as if the hereditary strain connected all that sat upon those grassy tombs in bonds of stricter kindred with all that slept beneath them, and the pure flame of their christian love derived, I doubt not, a new and innocent fervor from the deeply stirred embers of their ancestral piety.

THE FIRST SABBATH.

GRAHAME.

Six days the heavenly host, in circle vast,
 Like that untouching cincture which enzones
 The globe of Saturn, compassed wide this orb,
 And with the forming mass floated along,
 In rapid course, through yet untravelled space,
 Beholding God's stupendous power, a world
 Bursting from chaos at the omnific will,
 And perfect ere the sixth day's evening star
 On Paradise arose. Blessed that eve!
 The sabbath's harbinger, when, all complete,
 In freshest beauty from Jehovah's hand,
 Creation bloomed; when Eden's twilight face
 Smiled like a sleeping babe. The voice divine
 A holy calm breathed o'er the goodly work;
 Mildly the sun, upon the loftiest trees,
 Shed mellowly a sloping beam. Peace reigned,
 And love, and gratitude; the human pair
 Their orisons poured forth; love, concord, reigned.
 The falcon, perched upon the blooming bough
 With Philomela, listened to her lay;
 Among the antlered herd, the tiger crouched
 Harmless; the lion's mane no terror spread
 Among the careless ruminating flock.
 Silence was o'er the deep; the noiseless surge,
 The last subsiding wave, of that dread tumult,
 Which raged, when ocean, at the mute command,
 Rushed furiously into his new cleft bed,

Was gently rippling on the pebbled shore ;
While, on the swell, the sea bird with her head
Wing-veiled, slept tranquilly. The host of heaven,
Entranced in new delight, speechless adored,
Nor stopped their fleet career, nor changed their form
Encircular, till on that hemisphere—
In which the blissful garden sweet exhaled
Its incense, odorous clouds—the sabbath dawn
Arose ; then wide the flying circle oped,
And soared, in semblance of a mighty rainbow—
Silent ascend the choirs of seraphim ;
No harp resounds, mute is each voice ; the burst
Of joy and praise reluctant they repress,
For love and concord all things so attuned
To harmony, that earth must have received
The grand vibration, and to the centre shook ;
But soon as to the starry altitudes
They reached, then what a storm of sound tremendous
Swelled through the realms of space ! The morning stars
Together sang, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy ! Loud was the peal ; so loud
As would have quite o'erwhelmed the human sense ;
But to the earth it came a gentle strain,
Like softest fall breathed from æolian lute,
When, 'mid the chords, the evening gale expires.
Day of the Lord ! creation's hallowed close !
Day of the Lord !—prophetical they sang—
Benignant mitigation of that doom
Which must, ere long, consign the fallen race,
Dwellers in yonder star, to toil and woe !

THE POEM OF JOB.

LOWTH.

It has long been a dispute among the learned, whether the poem of Job consists of fable or a true history. This question, if authority alone be applied to, must long since have been decided in favor of those who assert it to be a real history.

With me, I confess, on the other hand, it is no longer matter of opinion, but I feel very little doubt, that the subject of the poem is altogether fabulous, and designed to teach us, that, 'the rewards of virtue being in another state, it is very possible for the good to suffer afflictions in this life ; but that, when it so happens, it is permitted by Providence for the wisest reasons, though they may not be obvious to human eyes.' But, before I proceed to examine the grounds of this opinion, it may be necessary to premise a few remarks in reply to those who may think the divine authority of the book affected, by the supposition of its not being founded in fact. For my own part, I cannot conceive that the sanctity, the dignity, or the utility of that book will be in the least affected, though we should suppose no such person as Job ever existed.

If moral precepts conveyed in the garb of fabu-

lous narrations, allure the hearers by the pleasure they afford, if they strike the mind more forcibly, are more easily understood, and better retained, than abstract sentiments, I see no reason why this mode of writing should be deemed unworthy of inspiration. Indeed, on the contrary, we find it made use of by Christ himself; nor does it at all derogate from his force as a moral teacher, that the good Samaritan, the rich man and Lazarus, &c., were not real persons.

I shall not, however, rest here; for I assert further, that the book of Job is more instructive as a fable, than it could possibly be as a true history. Taken as a mere relation of a matter of fact, it is necessary to suppose that the sentiments and conversations are exhibited exactly as they were spoken, and are the sentiments of mere mortals, not actuated by the spirit of God; for we find God has reproved both Job and his friends as being severally mistaken. It would then be impossible to determine what was true or what false; no doctrine of religion, no precept of morality, could with certainty be deduced from these conversations. In the whole book, the historical part,—and how short is that!—and the words attributed to God himself, would be alone divine, or of divine authority; the rest would be all human. Considered as a fable, the case is different. The author, composing under the influence of divine inspiration,

we may reasonably suppose, has attributed to the fictitious characters, such sentiments as were proper and natural to their state and circumstances. We have then, in the first place, a picture of the human mind drawn by the finger of God ; and, in the next, we may rest satisfied, that Job and his friends err only in the principal matter upon which they dispute, and only on the points for which God has reproved them ; but that whatever is said, exclusive of this, is founded on divine truth ; such is the mention of the angels by Eliphaz, and the assertion of Job, that there is none pure among mortals. Finally, we are by these means enabled both to determine what are the sentiments which immediately meet with the approbation of God, and what are the errors which are intended to be exposed.

PRACTICE OF THE POSITIVE DUTIES OF RELIGION.

ADVENTURER.

THAT mankind have any natural propensity to ill, or that their minds are subject to the influence of any invisible and malevolent being, are notions that of late have been treated with utmost contempt and disdain. And yet I have remarked, that men frequently neglect to practise those du-

ties of religion, without which they believe the Divine favor cannot be secured, though by such neglect they do not obtain any immediate advantage.

Of the duties and the privileges of religion, prayer is generally acknowledged to be the chief; and yet I am afraid that there are few, who will not be able to recollect some seasons, in which their unwillingness to pray has been more than in proportion to the labor and the time that it required; seasons in which they would have been less willing to repeat a prayer than any other composition, and rather than have spent five minutes in an address to God, would have devoted an equal space of time wholly to the convenience of another, without any enjoyment or advantage to themselves.

These facts, I believe, will scarcely be controverted by any; and those who cannot show that they have adequate natural causes, must allow that they have some other. It must also be acknowledged, that if men are tempted to neglect the worship of God, by any spiritual enemy, to worship God, is, by such an enemy, known to be their interest; but because I would not rest much upon this argument in favor of religion, I shall only say, that it has more force than any that I have heard against it.

I believe, indeed, there are some, who, with

whatever reluctance, punctually conform to the rituals of religion, as an atonement for an allowed and perpetual neglect of virtue ; who dream, that by going to church on Sunday, they balance the account of the week, and may again lie, defraud, swear, and be drunken with impunity. These wretches, although in spite of indignation they move my pity, I shall not here reprove ; because their conduct does not only imply the grossest ignorance, but the most deplorable stupidity ; and it is hopeless to write for those, of whom it cannot be expected that they should read.

There are others, who, believing that neither virtue nor religion alone is sufficient to secure immortality, neglect religion as useless, because they cannot resolve to practise virtue ; so the purchase of a telescope would be a superfluous expense to a man that is blind, though all the advantages of sight cannot be obtained without it by those who can see.

Upon these slaves of sensuality, it is to be feared, little effect can be produced, by an address either to their reason or their passions ; for their reason is already convinced, and their passions alarmed ; they live in a perpetual violation of the dictates of conscience ; purposes of amendment are every moment formed and broken ; they look backward with remorse, and forward with terror, and they accumulate guilt, even while they are antici-

pating judgment. Nor can I press them to put on an appearance of religion for mere temporary purposes ; not only because it would be an aggravation of their wickedness, but because it would conceal their true character, and might therefore injure society.

He who has acquired an experimental knowledge of this duty, knows that nothing so forcibly restrains from ill, as the remembrance of a recent address to Heaven for protection and assistance. After having petitioned for power to resist temptation, there is so great an incongruity in not continuing the struggle, that we blush at the thought, and persevere, lest we lose all reverence for ourselves. After fervently devoting our souls to God, we start with horror at immediate apostasy ; every act of deliberate wickedness is then complicated with hypocrisy and ingratitude ; it is a mockery of the Father of mercy, the forfeiture of that peace in which we closed our address, and a renunciation of the hope that it inspired.

For a proof of this, let every man ask himself, as in the presence of 'Him who searches the heart, whether he has never been deterred from prayer by his fondness for some criminal gratification, which he could not with sincerity profess to give up, and which he knew he could not afterward repeat without greater compunction. If prayer and immorality appear to be thus incompat-

ible, prayer should not surely be lightly rejected by those who contend that moral virtue is the summit of human perfection, nor should it be encumbered with such circumstances as must inevitably render it less easy and less frequent. It should be considered as the wings of the soul, and should be always ready, when a sudden impulse prompts her to spring up to God. We should not think it always necessary to be either in a church or in our closet, to express joy, love, desire, trust, reverence, or complacency, in the fervor of a silent ejaculation. Adoration, hope, and even a petition, may be conceived in a moment; and the desire of the heart may ascend, without words, to 'Him by whom our thoughts are known afar off.' He, who considers himself as perpetually in the presence of the Almighty, need not fear that gratitude or homage can ever be ill timed, or that it is profane thus to worship in any circumstances that are not criminal.

There is no preservative from vice equal to this habitual and constant intercourse with God; neither does any thing equally alleviate distress, or heighten prosperity. In distress it sustains us with hope, and in prosperity it adds to every other enjoyment the delight of gratitude.

Let those, therefore, who have rejected religion, as they have given up incontestable advantages, try whether they cannot yet be recovered; let

them review the arguments by which their judgment has been determined, and see whether they compel the assent of reason ; and let those who, upon this recollection, perceive that, though they have professed infidelity, they do indeed believe and tremble, no longer sacrifice happiness to folly, but pursue that wisdom ' whose ways are pleasantness and peace.'

ADDRESS TO LIGHT.

MILTON.

HAIL holy Light ! offspring of Heaven, firstborn,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee unblamed ? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproached light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
 Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell ? before the sun,
 Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne
 With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the heavenly muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,
 Though hard and rare ; thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovereign vital lamp ; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn ;
 So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more

Cease I to wander where the muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song ; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit ; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides,
And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old ;
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers ; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine ;
But cloud instead, and ever during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate ; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

ON SOCIAL AFFECTION.

DRAKE.

Suck, little wretch, whilst yet thy mother lives,
 Suck the last drop her fainting bosom gives ;
 She dies, her tenderness outlasts her breath,
 And her fond love is provident in death.—WEBB.

THE exquisite and pathetic little picture of maternal tenderness exhibited in the motto of this sketch, is a lively proof of that intensity of feeling which binds our race in tenderness together. The same sweet sensations that glow through the closer ties of society, which pant in the bosom of the husband and the father, pervade likewise the whole mass of being ; and, though weaker in proportion to the distance of propinquity, yet he cannot be called wretched, who receives or communicates the smallest portion of influence. From the impassioned feelings of the mother, to him who stands joyless on the verge of apathy, the tide of affection flows in a long devious course ; clear, full, and vehement, it descends into the vale of life, where, after a short time, becoming tranquil and serene, it separates into many branches ; and these, again dividing, wander in a thousand streams, dispensing, as they move along, the sweets of health and happiness. That no felicity exists independent of a susceptibility for these emotions, is a certain

fact ; for to the heart of him who has been cold to filial or fraternal duty, the soothing charm of friendship and of love will ever be unknown. It is, therefore, evident, that to be happy, man must invariably consult the well being of others ; to his fellow creatures he must attribute the bliss which he enjoys ; it is a reward proportional to the exertion of his philanthropy. Abstract the man of virtue and benevolence from society, and you cut off the prime source of his happiness ; he has no proper object on which to place his affection or exercise his humanity ; the sudden rapture of the grateful heart, the tender tones of friendship, and the melting sweetness of expressive love, no longer thrill upon the ear, or swell his softened soul ; all is an aching void, a cheerless and almost unproductive waste ; yet even in this situation, barren as it is, where none are found to pour the balm of pity, or listen to the plaint of sorrow, even here some enjoyment is derived from letting loose our affections upon inanimate nature. ‘ Were I in a desert,’ says Sterne, ‘ I would find something in it to call forth my affections. If I could not do better, I would fasten them upon some sweet myrtle, or seek some melancholy cypress to connect myself to. I would court their shade and greet them kindly for their protection. I would cut my name upon them, and declare they were the loveliest trees throughout the desert. If their leaves

withered, I would teach myself to mourn ; and when they rejoiced, I would rejoice with them.'

That man was formed for society, seems a truth so well established, and the benefits arising from such an union, so apparent, that few would suppose it to have been doubted ; yet have there been philosophers whom hypothesis, or the love of eccentricity, has led to prefer that period,

' When wild in woods the noble savage ran.'

An election so absurd, merits not a serious refutation. Every day's experience must convince the man of observation, that our happiness depends upon the cultivation of our social duties, upon the nurture of humanity and benevolence ; that our crimes are nearly in proportion to the rupture of domestic harmony, and that the flagitious deeds which glare upon us with so horrid an aspect, are often the consequences of indirect deviation from the still small voice of duty and of love. He, who has been accustomed to despise the feelings of the son, the husband, and the friend, will not often be found proof against the allurements of interest and of vice. He, who, unless driven by hunger and despair, lifts up his daring arm to arrest the property or the life of his fellow creature, never felt those soft sensations which arise from the consciousness of being beloved ; for let no man be called wretched who has this in reserve, let no man be called poor who has a friend to consult.

Society has been aptly compared to a heap of embers, which, when separated, soon languish, darken, and expire ; but, if placed together, glow with a ruddy and intense heat ; a just emblem of the strength, happiness, and the security derived from the union of mankind. The savage, who never knew the blessings of combination, and he who quits society from apathy or misanthropic spleen, are like the separated embers, dark, dead, useless ; they neither give nor receive heat, neither love nor are beloved. To what acts of heroism and virtue, in every age and nation, has not the impetus of affection given rise ? To what gloomy misery, despair, and even suicide, has not the desertion of society led ? How often in the busy haunts of men, are all our noblest and gentlest virtues called forth ? And how in the bosom of the recluse, do all the soft emotions languish and grow faint ?

As a corroborating instance of what has been advanced throughout this paper, it shall be illustrated with the following anecdote.

A respectable character, after having long figured away in the gay world at Paris, was at length compelled to live in an obscure retreat in that city, the victim of severe and unforeseen misfortunes. He was so indigent, that he subsisted on an allowance from the parish. Every week a quantity of bread was sent to him sufficient for his support,

and yet, at length, he demanded more. On this the curate sent for him. He went. 'Do you live alone?' said the curate. 'With whom, sir,' answered the unfortunate man, 'is it possible I should live? I am wretched; you see that I am, since I thus solicit charity, and am abandoned by all the world.' 'But, sir,' continued the curate, 'if you live alone, why do you ask for more bread than is sufficient for yourself?' The other was quite disconcerted, and at last, with great reluctance, confessed that he had a dog. The curate did not drop the subject. He desired him to observe, that he was only the distributor of the bread that belonged to the poor, and that it was absolutely necessary that he should dispose of his dog. 'Ah, sir,' exclaimed the poor man, weeping, 'and if I lose my dog, who is then to love me?' The good parson, melting into tears, took his purse, and giving it him, 'Take this, sir,' said he; 'this is mine; this I can give.'

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

ANONYMOUS.

GROUP after group are gathering, such as prest
 Once to their Saviour's arms, and gently laid
 Their cherub heads upon his shielding breast,
 Though sterner souls the fond approach forbade ;
 Group after group glide on with noiseless tread,
 And round Jehovah's sacred altar meet,
 Where holy thoughts in infant hearts are bred,
 And holy words their ruby lips repeat,
 Oft with a chastened glance and modulation sweet.

Yet some there are, upon whose childish brows
 Wan poverty hath done the work of care !
 Look up, ye sad ones ! 't is your Father's house,
 Beneath whose consecrated dome you are.
 More gorgeous robes ye see, and trappings rare,
 And watch the quadrier forms that gaily move,
 And deem, perchance, mistaken as you are,
 The coat of many colors proves His love,
 Whose sign is in the heart, and whose reward above.

And ye, blest laborers in this humble sphere,
 To deeds of saintlike charity inclined,
 Who from your cells of meditation dear,
 Come forth to guide the weak, untutored mind,

Yet ask no payment, save one smile refined
Of grateful love ; one tear of contrite pain !
Meekly ye forfeit to your mission kind,
The rest of earthly sabbaths.—Be your gain
A sabbath without end, 'mid your celestial plain !

VANITY INSCRIBED ON ALL THINGS.

DR WATTS,

TIME, like a long flowing stream, makes haste into eternity, and is forever lost and swallowed up there; and, while it is hastening to its period, it sweeps away all things with it which are not immortal. There is a limit appointed by Providence to the duration of all the pleasant and desirable scenes of life, to all the works of the hands of men, with all the glories and excellences of animal nature, and all that is made of flesh and blood. Let us not dote upon any thing here below, for Heaven hath inscribed vanity upon it. The moment is hastening when the decree of Heaven shall be uttered, and Providence shall pronounce upon every glory of the earth, 'Its time shall be no longer.'

What is that stately building, that princely palace, which now entertains and amuses our sight with ranks of marble columns and wide spreading arches? that gay edifice which enriches our imagination with a thousand royal ornaments, and a profusion of costly and glittering furniture? Time and all its circling hours, with a swift wing are bounding away; decay steals upon it insensibly, and a few years hence it shall lie in moulder-

ing ruin and desolation. Unhappy possessor, if he have no better inheritance!

What are these visible heavens, those lowering skies, and this globe of the earth? They are indeed the glorious workmanship of the Almighty. But they are waxing old, and waiting their period too, when the angel shall pronounce upon them that time shall be no more. The heavens shall be folded up as a vesture, the elements of the lower world shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works thereof, shall be burned with fire. May the unruinable world be but my portion, and the heaven of heavens my inheritance, which is built for an eternal mansion for the Son of God! These buildings shall outlive time, and nature, and exist through unknown ages of felicity!

What have we mortals to be proud of in our present state, when every human glory is so fugitive and fading? Let the brightest and the best of us say to ourselves, that we are but dust and vanity.

Even those noble powers of human life, which seem to have something angelical in them, I mean the powers of wit, and fancy, gay imagination, and capacious memory, they are all subject to the same laws of decay and death. What though they can raise and animate beautiful scenes in a moment, and, in imitation of creating power, can spread bright appearances and new worlds before

the senses and souls of their friends? What though they can entertain the better part of mankind, the refined and polite world, with high delight and rapture? These scenes of rapturous delight grow flat and old by a frequent review, and the very powers that raised them grow feeble apace. What though they can raise immortal applause and fame to their possessors? It is but the immortality of an empty name, a mere succession of the breath of man, and it is a short sort of immortality too, which must die and perish when this world perishes; a poor shadow of duration, indeed, while the real period of these powers is hastening every day. They languish and die as fast as animal nature, which has a large share in them, makes haste to its decay; and the time of their exercise shall shortly be no more.

The God of nature has pronounced an impassible period upon all the powers, and pleasures, and glories of this mortal state. Let us then be afraid to make any of them our boast or our happiness, but point our affections to those divine objects, whose nature is everlasting; let us seek those religious attainments, and those new created powers of a sanctified mind, concerning which it shall never be pronounced, that their time shall be no longer.

Oh! may every one of us be humbly content, at the call of Heaven, to part with all that is

pleasing or magnificent here on earth. Let us resign even these agreeable talents when the God of nature demands ; and when the hour arrives which shall close our eyes to all visible things, and lay our fleshly structure in the dust, let us yield up our whole selves to the hands of our Creator, who shall reserve our spirits with himself ; and while we cheerfully give up all that was mortal to the grave, we may lie down full of the joyful hope of a rising immortality. New and unknown powers and glories, brighter flames of imagination, richer scenes of wit and fancy, and diviner talents are preparing for us when we shall awake from the dust, and the mind itself shall have its faculties in a sublime state of improvement. These shall make us equal, if not superior to angels, for we are nearer akin to the Son of God than they are, and therefore we shall be made more like him.

MORAL DIGNITY OF THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE.

WAYLAND.

In the most enlarged sense of the terms, 'the field is the world.' Our design is radically to affect the temporal and eternal interests of the

whole race of man. We have made an estimate of the miseries of this world. We have seen how, in many places, the human mind, shackled by ignorance and enfeebled by vice, has dwindled almost to the standard of a brute. Our indignation has been kindled at hearing men immortal as ourselves, bowing down and worshipping a wandering beggar, or paying adorations to reptiles and to stones.

Not only is intellect every where under the dominion of idolatry, prostrated; beyond the boundaries of Christendom, on every side, the dark places of the earth are filled with the habitations of cruelty. We have mourned over the savage ferocity of the Indians of our Western wilderness. We have turned to Africa, and seen almost the whole continent a prey to lawless banditti, or else bowing down in the most revolting idolatry. We have descended along her coast, and beheld villages burnt or depopulated, fields laid waste; and her people, who have escaped destruction, naked and famishing, flee to their forests at the sight of a stranger. We have asked, what fearful visitation of Heaven has laid these settlements in ruins? What destroying pestilence has swept over this land, consigning to oblivion almost its entire population? What mean the smoking ruins of so many habitations? And why is yon fresh sod crimsoned and slippery with the traces of recent mur-

der? We have been pointed to the dark slave ship hovering over her coast, and have been told that two hundred thousand defenceless beings are annually stolen away, to be murdered on their passage, or consigned for life to captivity more terrible than death!

We have turned to Asia, and beheld how the demon of her idolatry has worse than debased, has brutalized the mind of man. Every where his despotism has been grievous; here, with merciless tyranny, he has exulted in the misery of his victims. He has rent from the human heart all that was endearing in the charities of life. He has taught the mother to tear away the infant as it smiled in her bosom, and cast it, the shrieking prey, to contending alligators. He has taught the son to light the funeral pile, and to witness unmoved, the dying agonies of his widowed, murdered mother!

We have looked upon all this; and our object is, to purify the whole earth from these abominations. Our object will not have been accomplished till the tomahawk shall be buried forever, and the tree of peace spread its broad branches from the Atlantic to the Pacific; until a thousand smiling villages shall be reflected from the waves of the Missouri, and the distant valleys of the West echo with the song of the reaper; till the wilderness and the solitary place shall have been

glad for us, and the desert has rejoiced and blossomed as the rose.

Our labors are not to cease, until the last slave ship shall have visited the coast of Africa, and, the nations of Europe and America having long since redressed her aggravated wrongs, Ethiopia, from the Mediterranean to the Cape, shall have stretched forth her hand unto God.

We have considered these beings as immortal, and candidates for an eternity of happiness or misery. Our object is to convey to those who are perishing the news of salvation. It is to furnish every family upon the face of the whole earth with the word of God, written in its own language, and to send to every neighbourhood a preacher of the cross of Christ. Our object will not be accomplished until every idol temple shall have been utterly abolished, and a temple to Jehovah erected in its room; until this earth, instead of being a theatre on which immortal beings are preparing by crime for eternal condemnation, shall become one universal temple, in which the children of men are learning the anthems of the blessed above, and becoming meet to join the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. Our design will not be completed until—

'One song employs all nations, and all cry,
Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us ;
The dwellers in the vales, and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.'

The object of the missionary enterprise, embraces every child of Adam. And now we ask, What object ever undertaken by man can compare with this same design of evangelizing the world? Patriotism itself fades away before it, and acknowledges the supremacy of an enterprise which seizes with so strong a grasp, upon both the temporal and eternal destinies of the whole family of man.

ON FAMILY WORSHIP.

CECIL.

FAMILY religion is of unspeakable importance. Its effect will greatly depend on the sincerity of the head of the family, and on his mode of conducting the worship of his household. If his children and servants do not see his prayers exemplified in his temper and manners, they will be disgusted with religion. Tediousness will weary them. Fine language will shoot above them. Formality of connexion or composition they will

not comprehend. Gloominess or austerity of devotion will make them dread religion as a hard service. Let them be met with smiles. Let them be met as for the most delightful service in which they can be engaged. Let them find it short, savory, simple, plain, tender, heavenly. Worship, thus conducted, may be used as an engine of vast power in a family. It diffuses a sympathy through the members. It calls off the mind from the deadening effect of worldly affairs. It arrests every member, with a morning and evening sermon, in the midst of all the hurries and cares of life. It says, 'There is a God!' 'There is a spiritual world!' 'There is a life to come!' It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind. It furnishes a tender and judicious father or master with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where a direct admonition might be inexpedient. It enables him to relieve the weight with which subordination or service often sits on the minds of inferiors.

Religion should be prudently brought before a family. The old Dissenters wearied their families. Jacob reasoned well with Esau, about the tenderness of his children and his flocks and herds. Something gentle, quiet, moderate, should be our aim. There should be no scolding. It should be mild and pleasant.

Nothing of superstition should attach to family duty. It is not absolutely and in all cases indis-

pensable. If unavoidably interrupted, we omit it, it is well. If I were peremptorily ordered, as the Jews were, to bring a lamb, I must be absolute. But this service is my liberty, not my task. I do not, however, mean in any degree to relax the proper obligation.

Children and servants should see us acting on the Psalmist's declaration, 'I will speak of thy testimony before kings.' If a great man happen to be present, let them see that I deem him nothing before the word of God!

TASTE AND SENSIBILITY

NO PROOF OF PIETY.

CHALMERS.

AMID all that illusion which momentary visitations of seriousness and of sentiment throw around the character of man, let us never lose sight of the test, that, 'by their fruits ye shall know them.' It is not coming up to this test, that you hear and are delighted. It is that you hear and do. This is the ground upon which the reality of your religion is discriminated now; and on the day of reckoning, this is the ground upon which your religion will be judged then, and that award is to be passed upon you, which will fix and perpetuate

your destiny for ever. You have a taste for music. This no more implies the hold and the ascendancy of religion over you, than that you have a taste for beautiful scenery, or a taste for painting, or even a taste for the sensualities of epicurism. But music may be made to express the glow and the movement of devotional feeling; and is it saying nothing to say that the heart of him who listens with a raptured ear, is through the whole time of the performance, in harmony with such a movement? Why, it is saying nothing to the purpose. Music may lift the inspiring note of patriotism; and the inspiration may be felt; and it may thrill over the recesses of the soul, to the mustering up of all its energies; and it may sustain to the last cadences of the song, the firm nerve and purpose of intrepidity; and all this may be realized upon him, who, in the day of battle and upon actual collision with the dangers of it, turns out to be a coward.

The faithful application of this test would put to flight a host of other delusions. It may be carried round among all these phenomena of human character, where there is the exhibition of something associated with religion, but which is not religion itself. An exquisite relish for music is no test of the influence of Christianity. Neither are many other of the exquisite sensibilities of our nature. When a kind mother closes the eyes of

her expiring babe, she is thrown into a flood of sensibility, and soothing to her heart are the sympathy and the prayers of an attending minister. When a gathering neighbourhood assemble to the funeral of an acquaintance, one pervading sense of regret and tenderness sits on the face of the company; and the deep silence, broken only by the solemn utterance of the man of God, carries a kind of pleasing religiousness along with it. The sacredness of the hallowed day, and the decencies of its observation, may engage the affections of him who loves to walk in the footsteps of his father; and every recurring sabbath may bring to his bosom, the charm of its regularity and its quietness. Religion has its accompaniments; and in these, there may be something to soothe, and to fascinate, even in the absence of the appropriate influences of religion. The deep and tender impression of a family bereavement, is not religion. The love of established decencies, is not religion. The charm of all that sentimentalism which is associated with many of its solemn and affecting services, is not religion. They may form the distinct folds of its accustomed drapery; but they do not, any, or all of them put together, make up the substance of the thing itself. A mother's tenderness may flow most gracefully over the tomb of her departed little one; and she may talk the while of that heaven whither its spirit has ascended.

The man whom death had widowed of his friend, may abandon himself to the movements of that grief, which for a time will claim an ascendancy over him; and among the multitude of his other reveries, may love to hear of the eternity, where sorrow and separation are alike unknown. He who has been trained, from his infant days, to remember the sabbath, may love the holiness of its aspect, and associate himself with all its observances, and take a delighted share in the mechanism of its forms. But let not these think, because the tastes and the sensibilities which engross them, may be blended with religion, that they indicate either its strength or its existence within them. I recur to the test. I press its imperious exactions upon you. I call for fruit, and demand the permanency of a religious influence on the habits and the history. Oh! how many who take a flattering unction to their souls, when they think of their amiable feelings, and their becoming observations, with whom this severe touchstone would, like the head of Medusa, put to flight all their complacency. The afflictive dispensation is forgotten; and he on whom it was laid, is practically as indifferent to God and to eternity as before. The sabbath services come to a close; and they are followed by the same routine of weekday worldliness as before. In neither the one case nor the other, do we see more of the radical influence of Christian-

ity, than in the sublime and melting influence of sacred music upon the soul ; and all this tide of emotion is found to die away from the bosom, like the pathos or like the loveliness of a song.

ON THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER.

BLAIR.

YOUTH is the proper season for cultivating the benevolent and humane affections. As a great part of your happiness is to depend on the connexions which you form with others, it is of high importance that you acquire, betimes, the temper and the manners which will render such connexions comfortable. Let a sense of justice be the foundation of all your social qualities. In your most early intercourse with the world, and even in your youthful amusements, let no unfairness be found. Engrave on your mind that sacred rule, of 'doing all things to others, according as you wish that they should do unto you.' For this end, impress upon yourselves a deep sense of the original and natural equality of men. Whatever advantages of birth or fortune you possess, never display them with an ostentatious superiority. Leave the subordinations of rank to regulate the intercourse of more advanced years. At present,

it becomes you to act among your companions, as man with man. Remember how unknown to you are the vicissitudes of the world; and how often they, on whom ignorant and contemptuous young men once looked down with scorn, have risen to be their superiors in future years.

Compassion is an emotion of which you ought never to be ashamed. Graceful in youth is the tear of sympathy, and the heart that melts at the tale of woe. Let not ease and indulgence contract your affections, and wrap you up in a selfish enjoyment. But go sometimes to the 'house of mourning,' as well as 'to the house of feasting.' Accustom yourselves to think of the distresses of human life; of the solitary cottage, the dying parent, and the weeping orphan. 'Thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt surely give unto him in the day of his need; and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works.' Never sport with pain and distress in any of your amusements, nor treat even the meanest insect with wanton cruelty.

In young minds, there is commonly a strong propensity to particular intimacies and friendships. Youth, indeed, is the season when friendships are sometimes formed, which not only continue

through succeeding life, but which glow to the last, with a tenderness unknown to the connexions begun in cooler years. The propensity therefore is not to be discouraged ; though at the same time it must be regulated with much circumspection and care. Too many of the pretended friendships of youth are mere combinations in pleasure. They are often founded on capricious likings, suddenly contracted, and as suddenly dissolved. Sometimes they are the effect of interested complaisance and flattery on the one side, and of credulous fondness on the other. Beware of such rash and dangerous connexions, which may afterwards load you with dishonor. Remember that by the character of those whom you choose for your friends, your own is likely to be formed, and will certainly be judged of by the world. Be slow, therefore, and cautious in contracting intimacy ; but when a virtuous friendship is once established, consider it as a sacred engagement. Expose not yourselves to the reproach of lightness and inconstancy, which always bespeak either a trifling or a base mind. Reveal none of the secrets of your friend. Be faithful to his interests. Forsake him not in danger. Abhor the thought of acquiring any advantage by his prejudice or hurt. 'There is a friend that loveth at all times, and a brother that is born

for adversity. 'Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not.'

In order to render yourselves amiable in society, correct every appearance of harshness in behaviour. Let that courtesy distinguish your demeanour, which springs, not so much from studied politeness, as from a mild and gentle heart. Follow the customs of the world in matters indifferent, but stop when they become sinful. Let your manners be simple and natural, and of course they will be engaging. Affectation is certain deformity. By forming themselves on fantastic models, and vying with one another in every reigning folly, the young begin with being ridiculous, and end in being vicious and immoral.

THE LOST PLEIAD.

MRS HEMANS.

Like the lost Pleiad, seen no more below.—BYRON.

AND is there glory from the heavens departed ?
 Oh ! void unmarked ! thy sisters of the sky
 Still hold their place on high,
 Though from its rank thine orb so long hath started,
 Thou, that no more art seen of mortal eye.

Hath the night lost a gem, the regal night ?
 She wears her crown of old magnificence,
 Though thou art exiled thence—
 No desert seems to part those urns of light,
 'Midst the far depth of purple gloom intense.

They rise in joy, the starry myriads burning—
 The shepherd greets them on his mountains free ;
 And from the silvery sea
 To them the sailor's wakeful eye is turning—
 Unchanged they rise, they have not mourned for thee.

Couldst thou be shaken from thy radiant place
 Even as a dewdrop from the myrtle spray,
 Swept by the wind away ?
 Wert thou not peopled by some glorious race,
 And was there power to smite them with decay ?

Why, who shall talk of thrones, of sceptres riven?

Bowed be our hearts to think of what we are,

When from its height afar

A world sinks thus—and yon majestic heaven

Shines not the less for that one vanished star!

FAITH.

CECIL.

CHILDREN are very early capable of impression. I imprinted on my daughter the idea of faith at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed to delight her wonderfully. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said to her, 'My dear, you have some pretty beads there.'

'Yes, papa!'

'And you seem to be vastly pleased with them.'

'Yes, papa!'

'Well now, throw 'em behind the fire!'

The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at me, as though she ought to have a reason for such a cruel sacrifice. 'Well, my dear, do as you please; but you know I never told you to do any thing, which I did not think would be good for you.'

She looked at me a few moments longer, and then, summoning up all her fortitude, her breast heaving with the effort, she dashed them into the fire.

'Well,' said I, 'there let them lie; you shall hear more about them another time, but say no more about them now.'

Some days after, I bought her a box full of

larger beads, and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure and set it before her; she burst into tears with ecstasy.

‘Those, my child,’ said I, ‘are yours, because you believed me, when I told you it would be better for you to throw those two or three paltry beads behind the fire. Now that has brought you this treasure. But now, my dear, remember, as long as you live, what faith is. I did all this to teach you the nature of faith. You threw your beads away when I bid you, because you had faith in me, that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same confidence in God. Believe every thing that he says in his word. Whether you understand it or not, have faith in him that he means you good.’

ADVICE TO YOUTH.

BLAIR.

At your first setting out in life, especially when yet unacquainted with the world and its snares, when every pleasure enchants with its smile, and every object shines with the gloss of novelty, beware of the seducing appearances which surround you; and recollect what others have suffered from the power of headstrong desire. If you allow any

passion, even though it be esteemed innocent, to acquire an absolute ascendant, your inward peace will be impaired. But if any which has the taint of guilt take early possession of your mind, you may date from that moment the ruin of your tranquillity. Nor with the season of youth does the peril end. To the impetuosity of youthful desire succeed the more sober, but not less dangerous, attachments of advancing years, when the passions which are connected with interest and ambition begin their reign, and too frequently extend their malignant influence even over those periods of life which ought to be most tranquil. From the first to the last of man's abode on earth, the discipline must never be relaxed of guarding the heart from the dominion of passion. Eager passions, and violent desires were not made for man. They exceed his sphere; they find no adequate objects on earth; and of course can be productive of nothing but misery. The certain consequence of indulging them, is, that there shall come an evil day, when the anguish of disappointment shall drive us to acknowledge that all which we enjoy 'availeth us nothing.'

You are not to imagine, that the warnings which I have given in this discourse are applicable only to signal offenders. Think not, as I am afraid too many do, that because your passions have not hurried you into atrocious deeds, they

have therefore wrought no mischief, and have left no sting behind them. By a continued series of loose, though apparently trivial, gratifications, the heart is often as thoroughly corrupted, as by the commission of any one of those enormous crimes which spring from great ambition, or great revenge. Habit gives the passions strength, while the absence of glaring guilt seemingly justifies them; and, unawakened by remorse, the sinner proceeds in his course, till he wax bold in guilt, and become ripe for ruin. For by gradual and latent steps the destruction of our virtue advances. Did the evil unveil itself at the beginning; did the storm which is to overthrow our peace discover, as it rose, all its horrors, precautions would more frequently be taken against it. But we are imperceptibly betrayed; and from one licentious attachment, one criminal passion, are, by a train of consequences, drawn on to another, till the government of our minds is irrecoverably lost. The enticing and the odious passions are, in this respect, similar in their process; and, though by different roads, conduct at last to the same issue. David, when he first beheld Bathsheba, did not plan the death of Uriah. Haman was not delivered up all at once to the madness of revenge; his passion rose with the rising tide of prosperity; and pride completed what prosperity began. What was originally no more than displeasure at

Mordecai's disrespect, increased with every invitation he received to the banquet of the queen, till it impelled him to devise the slaughter of a whole nation, and ended in a decree of rage which confounded his reason, and hurried him to ruin. In this manner, every criminal passion in its progress swells and blackens; and what was at first a small cloud, such as the prophet's servant saw, 'no bigger than a man's hand, rising from the sea,' is soon found to carry the tempest in its womb.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A PEACEABLE TEMPER.

BARROW.

To INDUCE us to the practice of the duty of living peaceably, we may consider:

1. 'How good and pleasant a thing it is,' as David saith, 'for brethren,' and so we are all, at least by nature, 'to live together in unity.' How that, as Solomon saith, 'Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.' How delicious that conversation is, which is accompanied with a mutual confidence, freedom, courtesy, and complaisance; how calm the mind, how composed the affections, how se-

rene the countenance, how melodious the voice, how sweet the sleep, how contentful the whole life is of him that neither deviseth mischief against others, or suspects any to be contrived against himself; and contrariwise, how ungrateful and loathsome a thing it is to abide in a state of enmity, wrath, dissention; having the thoughts distracted with solicitous care, anxious suspicion, envious regret; the heart boiling with choler, the face overclouded with discontent, the tongue jarring and out of tune, the ears filled with discordant noises of contradiction, clamor, and reproach; the whole frame of the body and soul distempered and disturbed with the worst of passions. How much more comfortable it is to walk in smooth and even paths, than to wander in rugged ways overgrown with briers, obstructed with rubs, and beset with snares; to sail steadily in a quiet, than to be tossed in a tempestuous sea; to behold the lovely face of heaven smiling with a cheerful serenity, than to see it frowning with clouds or raging with storms; to hear harmonious concerts, than dissonant wranglings; to see objects correspondent in graceful symmetry, than lying disorderly in confused heaps; to be in health, and have the natural humors consent in moderate temper, than, as it happens in diseases, agitated with tumultuous commotions; how all senses and faculties of man unanimously rejoice in those emblems

of peace, order, harmony, and proportion ; yea, how nature universally delights in a quiet stability, or undisturbed progress of motion ; the beauty strength and vigor of every thing requires a concurrence of force, cooperation, and contribution of help ; all things thrive and flourish by communicating reciprocal aid, and the world subsists by a friendly conspiracy of its parts ; and especially, that political society of men chiefly aims at peace as its end, depends on it as its cause, relies on it as its support. How much a peaceful state resembles heaven, into which neither complaint, pain, nor clamor do ever enter, but blessed souls converse together in perfect love, and in perpetual concord ; and how a condition of enmity represents the state of hell, that black and dismal region of dark hatred, fiery wrath, and horrible tumult. How like a paradise the world would be, flourishing in joy and rest, if men would cheerfully conspire in affection, and helpfully contribute to each other's content ; and how like a savage wilderness now it is, when, like wild beasts, they vex and persecute, worry and devour each other. How not only philosophy hath placed the supreme pitch of happiness in a calmness of mind, and tranquillity of life, void of care and trouble, of irregular passions and perturbations ; but that holy scripture itself, in that one term of peace, most usually comprehends all joy and content, all fe-

licity, and prosperity, so that the heavenly concert of angels, when they agree most highly to bless, and to wish the greatest happiness to mankind, could not better express their sense, than by saying, 'Be on earth peace, and good will among men.'

2. That as nothing is more sweet and delightful, so nothing is more comely and agreeable to human nature than peaceable living, it being, as Solomon saith, 'an honor to a man to cease from strife,' and consequently a disgrace to him to continue therein. That rage and fury may be the excellences of beasts, and the exerting their natural animosity in strife and combat may become them; but reason and discretion are the singular eminences of men, and the use of these the most natural and commendable method of deciding controversies among them; and that it extremely misbecomes them that are endowed with those excellent faculties so to abuse them; not to be able by reasonable expedients to compound differences, but with mutual damage and inconvenience to prorogue and increase them; not to discern how exceedingly better it is, to be helpful and beneficial, than to be mischievous and troublesome to one another. How foolishly and unskilfully they judge, that think by unkind speech and harsh dealing to allay men's distempers, alter their opinions, or remove their prejudices; as if they

should attempt to kill by administering nourishment, or to extinguish a flame by pouring oil upon it. How childish a thing it is, eagerly to contend about trifles, for the superiority in some impertinent contest, for the satisfaction of some petty humor, for the possession of some inconsiderable toy ; yea, how barbarous and brutish a thing it is, to be fierce and impetuous in the pursuit of things that please us, snarling at, biting, and tearing all competitors of our game, or opposers of our undertaking. But how divine and amiable, how worthy of human nature, of civil breeding, of prudent consideration it is, to restrain partial desires, to condescend to equal terms, to abate from rigorous pretences, to appease discords, and vanquish enmities by courtesy and discretion ; like the best and wisest commanders, who by skilful conduct, and patient attendance upon opportunity, without striking of a stroke, or shedding of blood, subdue their enemy.

3. How that peace, with its near alliance and concomitants, its causes and effects, love, meekness, gentleness, and patience, are, in sacred writ, reputed the genuine fruits of the Holy Spirit, issues of divine grace, and offsprings of heavenly wisdom, producing like themselves a goodly progeny of righteous deeds ; but that emulation, hatred, wrath, variance, and strife, derive their extraction from fleshly lust, hellish craft, or beastly

folly, propagating themselves also into a like ugly brood of wicked works. For so saith St James; 'If ye have bitter zeal and strife in your hearts, glory not, nor be deceived untruly. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish; for where emulation and strife are, there is tumult and every naughty thing; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, obsequious, full of mercy (or beneficence) and of good fruits, without partiality and dissimulation. And the fruit of righteousness is sowed in peace to those that make peace; and from whence are wars and quarrels among you? Are they not hence, even from your lusts, that war in your members?' Likewise, 'he loveth transgression that loveth strife; and a fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes,' saith Solomon. That the most wicked and miserable of creatures is described by titles denoting enmity and discord; 'the hater' (Satan) 'the enemy, the accuser, the slanderer, the destroyer,' the furious dragon, and mischievously treacherous snake; and how sad it is to imitate him in his practices, to resemble him in his qualities. But that the best, most excellent and most happy of beings delights to be styled, and accordingly to express himself, 'the God of love, mercy, and peace,' and his blessed Son to be called, and to be, 'the Prince of Peace,' the great 'Mediator,

Reconciler,' and 'Peacemaker;' who is also said from on high to have visited us, 'to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; and to guide our feet in the ways of peace.' That, lastly, no devotion is pleasing, no oblation acceptable to God, conjoined with hatred, or proceeding from an unreconciled mind: For, 'if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift' to our Saviour.

I close up all with this corollary, that if we must live lovingly and peaceably with all men, then much more are we obliged to do so with all Christians; to whom by nearer and firmer bands of holy alliance we are related; by more precious communions in faith and devotion we are endeared; by more peculiar and powerful obligations of divine commands, sacramental vows, and formal professions, we are engaged; our spiritual brethren, members of the same mystical body, temples of the same Holy Spirit, servants of the same Lord, subjects of the same Prince, professors of the same truth, partakers of the same hope, heirs of the same promise, and candidates of the same everlasting happiness.

TWILIGHT AND AUTUMN.

HENRY WARE, JR.

MARK how the earth, as the months are declining,
 Casts her green robes of beauty away ;
 In crimson and gold, groves and mountains are shining,
 Decked, as they fade, in their brightest array.
 Proudly they stand in gorgeous splendor,
 Glorious mid the gathering gloom ;
 Calmly waiting to surrender
 Honors that freshly in spring shall bloom.

Low in the west day's king is descending,
 Wrapt in his mantle of beauty and light ;
 The clouds, as they change, on their monarch attending,
 Press o'er his path, and involve it in night.
 Yet, though in darkness and clouds disappearing,
 Light eternal round him flows ;
 Light, that man and nature cheering,
 Shall call the gay morn from its deep repose.

Oh, when the day of thy life is over,
 In brightness like this mayst thou sink to thy rest ;
 While the last dark clouds that around thee hover
 Beam with light from the realms of the blest.
 Thus may thy pure and ripened spirit
 Glow in life's autumnal ray ;
 Calmly waiting to inherit
 Heaven's joyous springtime that fades not away.

HYMN.

H. KIRKE WHITE.

THROUGH sorrow's night, and danger's path,
Amid the deepening gloom,
We soldiers of an injured king
Are marching to the tomb.

There, when the turmoil is no more,
And all our powers decay,
Our cold remains, in solitude,
Shall sleep the years away.

Our labors done, securely laid
In this, our last retreat,
Unheeded o'er our silent dust
The storms of life shall beat.

These ashes poor, this little dust,
Our Father's care shall keep,
Till the last angel rise, and break
The long and dreary sleep.

Then love's soft dew, o'er every eye
Shall shed its mildest rays,
And the long silent dust shall burst,
With shouts of endless praise.

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